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Americans vs. Apartheid

HELEN VENDLER • LEON WIESELTIER: IN DEFENSE OF THE POOR • MICHAEL HARRINGTON

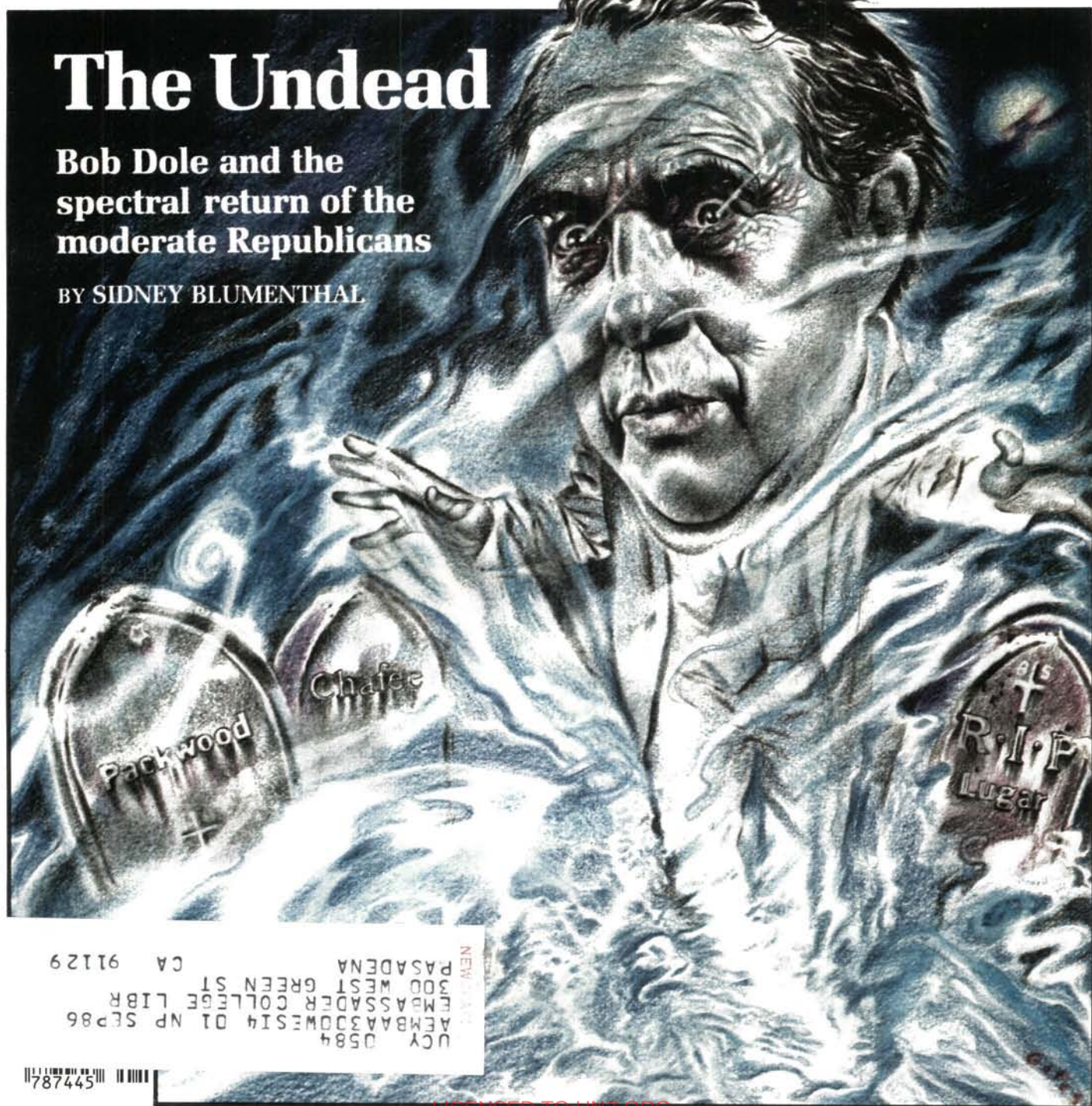
THE NEW REPUBLIC

DEC 26 1984

The Undead

Bob Dole and the
spectral return of the
moderate Republicans

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL



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CORRESPONDENCE

HELPING THE HUNGRY

To the editors:

It would be hard to find a more negative editorial than "Fearful Famine" (TNR, December 17). By selectively quoting defeatist attitudes and analyses such as those from Earthscan, who imply that current African disaster relief "can even do more harm than good," by leading "to corruption, dependency, long-term disruption of the national economy, and avoidance of reform," without stating that such relief can also relieve present suffering, the editorial undermines the generous impulses of your readers to give now to save millions from starving until diplomatic, governmental, agricultural, technical, and behavioral solutions and initiatives can be found and implemented to address the fundamental problems.

If the United States can reclaim its Southwest dust bowl, and Israel part of the Negev and other places, then Africa can do the same. As Earthscan itself suggests, reforestation, education, and improvement of agricultural methods are among the potential solutions. It is a matter of political will, self-help, and outside aid being directed to practical and acceptable solutions.

In the meantime, while the United Nations, the United States, and other donor nations, and the affected countries themselves, are beginning to look for fundamental solutions, the immediate humanitarian needs of starving millions must be met. That is the moral imperative that cannot be denied.

If your editorial had ended with some statement that despite the need for more "developmental aid that reduces, rather than increases, chronic dependency," help is urgently needed now, and added a list of names and addresses of reputable relief agencies to whom people could send checks, it would have served the cause of humanity more.

SELWYN M. WAINGROW
Rockville, Maryland

To the editors:

I was disappointed that you chose to restate *The New York Times* report that the Soviet bloc has furnished just 30,000 tons of food to Ethiopia while the United States has furnished 215,000 tons. In the same editorial you point

out in another context that the Soviet Union is unable to feed itself. The U.S.S.R. cannot contribute what it does not have.

MARGARET L. WHITE
Towson, Maryland

CRUZ NEWS

To the editors:

The abandonment of Arturo Cruz by the Reagan Administration ("Cruz Control," by Jefferson Morley, TNR, December 17) should have come as no surprise. In spite of all its voiced support of Mr. Cruz, the Administration worked in tandem with COSEP, the hard-line business group that was part of the Coordinadora coalition but not a constituency of Mr. Cruz's own political party.

It became evident early on that Mr. Cruz was being manipulated. The convincing proof came in Brazil, when he and the F.S.L.N. negotiated for Mr. Cruz's signature as the candidate of the Coordinadora. At that point Mr. Cruz phoned the COSEP representatives in Managua and was told not to agree to the terms and to ask for an indefinite extension.

This was a clear signal that COSEP and the Reagan Administration already had decided that Mr. Cruz and the Coordinadora would not participate in the election.

CARLOS TUNNERMANN
Ambassador of Nicaragua
Washington, D.C.

RIGHT ON, RIFKIN

To the editors:

Jeremy Rifkin's views may sound extreme, but to dismiss him ("The Prophet Jeremy," TNR, December 10) as "really asking that we give up hope of understanding or improving the material world" is an unsubstantiated exaggeration, as needlessly ridiculing as the image Eliot Marshall gives us of Mr. Khomeini with the Empathy Police.

When the depletion of fossil fuels, the destruction of the earth's forests, the eradication of animal species, the poisoning of our environment, the constant threat of global annihilation, and the other horrifying side effects of our booming technology have painted Western science into a corner,

"empathetic science" may well become the only option that would keep "the whole juggernaut" from lurching to a halt.

C. A. RUMBAUT
Austin, Texas

HOT FOR THE FREEZE

To the editors:

You advise the Democratic Party to avoid the nuclear freeze if it "wishes to be taken seriously about arms control" ("Bad Ideas And Good," TNR, December 3). You point out that the size of the weapons piles doesn't matter much. Indeed it doesn't. But the freeze is concerned not only with limiting the size of the piles but more importantly with stopping our persistent drift toward developing and deploying weapons that make the balance more precarious, a first strike more tempting in a crisis, and verifiable arms control even more difficult to attain in the future (e.g., the cruise missile). We have been devising and sometimes negotiating detailed controls of specific systems for thirty years and the arms race goes on, qualitatively and quantitatively. There is, of course, much more to be done than just stopping the dangerous drift now. In that sense, the freeze by itself is perhaps not really very serious arms control. But it is a very important first step in getting really serious about arms control.

DAVID RITTENHOUSE INGLIS
Amherst, Massachusetts

DEFENDING SHARON

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier clearly shows that he is more interested in a vendetta against Ariel Sharon than in researching the true facts of the war and its consequences ("Israel's Lebanon War," TNR, December 10). The war against Syria did not, as Mr. Wieseltier claims, backfire as a result of anything the Israelis did. The damage to Syria added up to hundreds of millions of dollars, and forced the Soviets to totally disregard their present projected battle strategy (which the Syrians use). I would think that anything that demonstrates American superiority (weaponry, etc.) and that sets our enemies back five years

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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FROM WASHINGTON

BHOPAL'S IN YOUR COURT

Everyone is suitably disgusted by the spectacle of American lawyers, led by a sickeningly prosperous-looking Melvin Belli, descending on the pathetic victims of the Bhopal chemical disaster, denouncing multinational corporations and baying for their contingency fees. But there's some confusion and some hypocrisy about what's wrong with this.

"Thanks to this solicitude," sneers a *Wall Street Journal* editorial, "the Indian victims could now wait interminably for a minuscule share of the damages awarded instead of getting faster and fairer compensation at home." In fact, the American system with its contingency fees that attract top lawyers, its punitive damages, its broader theories of liability, and its more prosperous and independent jurors is certain to produce vastly higher awards or negotiated settlements. That's why Union Carbide will be battling to make sure the suits are tried in Indian courts under Indian law.

The legal argument over where the trials will be held, and under what law, will be comically abstracted from the real issue, which is money. The doctrines of choice of forum and choice of law are among the most pointlessly arcane in the whole American legal system. Among other absurdities, you can expect to hear Union Carbide's Park Avenue lawyers arguing that it would be an unfair burden on them to have to

represent their client in America, rather than in India. Lawyers for the victims, meanwhile, will argue that these people who have never before left Bhopal would find it far more convenient to have their cases tried in Connecticut or California.

The substantive legal argument will be similarly unreal. It will deal with gas-kets and inspection procedures, while the question on the world's mind (and on the jury's, to the best of Melvin Belli's ability) will simply be how much money a rich American company should fork over to the poor victims of a horrible disaster.

One trouble with American-style justice is that it is so expensive. The leading study of cases like this one concluded that lawyers take thirty-five cents of every dollar the plaintiff recovers, and other lawyers claim another forty-five cents from the defendants. In other words, it costs seventy-seven cents in lawyers to get sixty-five cents to the victim. Union Carbide is already being told that its regular law firm, with a mere 177 lawyers is not capable of handling this case, and that it needs to hire specialists in Indian law, insurance law, and mass tort liability. In addition, doz-

ens of lawyers for Union Carbide's insurers, its insurance broker, and other related firms have already switched on their meters and are ticking away.

But the more serious trouble with litigation of this sort is that it attempts to solve a social problem in the framework of a personal dispute. The social problem is that life in general and technology in particular are inherently risky. Society must decide what risks are worth taking, and who should bear the burden when risky enterprises go awry. In its exclusive concern with the second question, the law distorts our answer to the first one. It measures with precision the loss from failed risks, but it ignores the benefits from risks that pay off. It therefore creates a social bias, not just against foolish risks, but against all risks.

For example, one of the two remaining American manufacturers of whooping cough vaccine announced last month that it was shutting down production. Despite a recent tenfold price increase, the manufacturer could no longer afford liability insurance for suits arising from the 1 shot in 310,000 with severe side effects.

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"This is an exquisite book"

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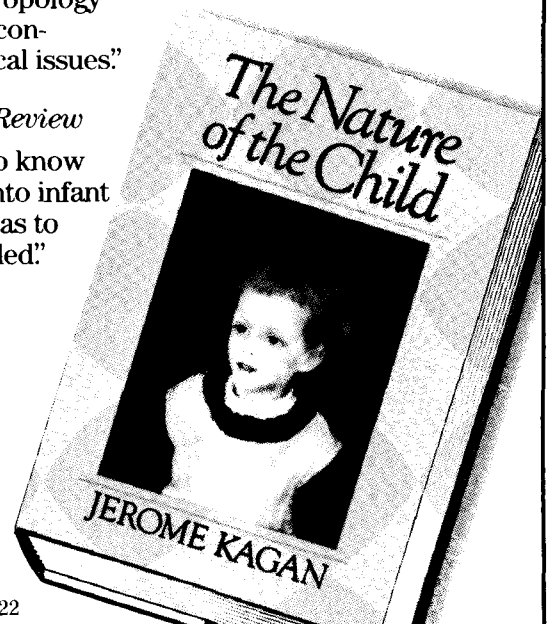
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JANUARY 7 & 14, 1985

APARTHEID'S APOLOGISTS

Because it prefers the understanding of insiders to the understanding of outsiders, Washington sometimes thwarts understanding. In the capital—that is, among the journalists who jam the capital—the “smart” analysis is usually the bureaucratic analysis, the structural analysis, the political analysis. This week, for example, the “smart” thing to say about the sudden return of South Africa’s sins to American consciousness is that the black community in America has made a calculation. Suzanne Garment, a leading Beltway anthropologist, charmingly summarized the conventional wisdom in *The Wall Street Journal*: “We know that some black leaders involved in this South Africa campaign have turned back to an old civil rights-style moral issue because they do not have a pornographer’s chance in Iran of succeeding in today’s political climate with the newer agenda of quotas and ever expanding social programs.” It is the explanation of the new black activism that is everywhere to be found.

Obviously the explanation has some merit. Black leaders do not deny it. Randall Robinson, the executive director of the lobby group TransAfrica, who is directing the protests, told a reporter from *The Washington Post* that “we were down so far we had to do something.” The black community was stunned by the magnitude of Ronald Reagan’s victory. The fulfillment of its political objectives looks increasingly remote. The traditional liberal waters upon which the blacks cast their bread are dry. The campaign of Jesse Jackson, and more generally the rise to prominence of the most demagogic and doctrinaire of

black leaders, has further aggravated the internecine warfare in the Democratic Party. And the wretchedness of black inner-city indigents increases. It is no wonder that the blacks have turned their attention to the wickedness of South Africa, though they would be wise to turn their attention back home sometime soon; agitation against apartheid is no substitute for the reckoning that American blacks must make with their own political mistakes.

Still, the political explanation has another purpose: to explain away. Something moral may be reduced to something political. The problem of the oppression of blacks in South Africa may be deflected onto the problem of the frustration of blacks in the United States. The most egregious example comes from Clarence M. Pendleton Jr., chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and a black man. In an outburst for which history will probably reward him with a bit of infamy, Mr. Pendleton suggested that black Americans agitating against South Africa are engaged in something a trifle treasonous. “If a black is on the defense committee and rises to the top, would he vote to send troops into South Africa or have this pigment attachment come first?” With blacks like this, who needs racists? Of course Mr. Pendleton was playing upon the geopolitical argument for American support for South Africa. But he failed to prove the present danger to the United States from the telling of the truth about the basest political system on the planet.

The blacks may be using the issue. The liberals may

be using the issue. (It was a matter of days before there were young Kennedys among the arrested; causes become chic with heartbreaking speed these days.) But who cares? It's about time somebody started using the issue. Quiet diplomacy, maybe. But quiet discussion, no. Almost anything that awakens the American conscience to the sickening state of South Africa has our approval. After all, the tyranny of 3 million whites over 32 million blacks is morally and politically much more primary than the search for publicity and political restoration on the part of some of the protestors. Indeed, here is a case where the old public relations proverb holds good: there is no such thing as bad publicity. (The protests have spread to sixteen cities so far.) The really "smart" thing to say about apartheid, then, is that it should burn in hell.

OF COURSE there remains the problem of what to do about it. The Administration insists upon quiet diplomacy. But quiet diplomacy may be complacently conducted or uncomplacently conducted. Chester A. Crocker, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, insists that by means of quiet diplomacy the United States is being very tough with South Africa. To which Bishop Desmond Tutu, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, drily retorted, "If this is getting tough, Lord help us when they get soft." We do not doubt that Mr. Crocker is alive to the magnitude of the wickedness of this state with which he deals. Still, there are at least four standards for our South Africa policy which we would put to him and to the Administration he represents.

First, the quietude that the Administration recommends must not be purchased at the price of America's moral credibility. The rhetorical restraint of Ronald Reagan, which was broken last week by the prodding of the protests, is a disgrace. The President has a responsibility to state forthrightly and frequently the full measure of this free nation's outrage at South African oppression. The man is hardly shy about ideological warfare. He has called the Soviet Union evil, which it is. He should call South Africa evil, which it is. If he fails to do so, he should not wonder that Americans will wonder about the sincerity of his passion for the values he always vaunts. (Incidentally, we welcome the recent letter of conservative Representatives, led by Minnesota Republican Vin Weber, that made precisely this point to the President.)

Second, there must be a point at which quiet diplomacy may be said to have failed. The United States cannot go on forever talking about its "leverage" without finally using it, and judging the results. Otherwise we are simply the Afrikaners' dupes. Or, to put it differently, the Administration must show, sooner or later, precisely what the difference is between "constructive engagement," as it calls its policy, and mere collaboration with the architects of apartheid.

Third, our "leverage" is not as great as we think it is.

We cannot make another country do what another country does not wish to do. (Witness our failed pressures on the Arabs in recent years.) And we certainly cannot make another country take itself apart and put itself back together, as social justice in South Africa will finally require. We can make life more difficult for the South African government—by means of an economic boycott, for example. (Last year's Solarz amendment in the House of Representatives offered a responsible formula for such pressure. See "Constructive Enragement," TNR, October 31, 1983.) And we can make life less difficult for the black South Africans by staying on their case. Indeed, language may be our strongest weapon. Even the President's reluctant pronouncement of last week appears to have had some effect, in both the release of political prisoners and the obvious discomfiture of President Pik Botha.

The South African leader stole a page from the rhetoric of his "nonaligned" neighbors and angrily complained that "the big superpowers—Russia and America—are writing out many recipes for us." But this impressed nobody. Mr. Botha and his electorate both know that open and active American hostility would be a catastrophe for his regime. And if white South Africans believe that Mr. Botha's continued rule will bring about this catastrophe, they may be more inclined to end it. By contrast, the appearance of American friendship is Mr. Botha's greatest electoral asset.

Finally, we must realize that things are getting worse, not better, in South Africa. Every year brings the mean creation of another bantustan, complete with sham ceremonies of independence, and the uprooting of thousands of families from land that has suddenly become *net blankes*—for whites only. This abomination is of far greater consequence than the increase in black living standards of which Chester Crocker is quick to boast. Well-fed slaves remain slaves. Every year also brings more sham "reforms" such as the new constitution, a document which professes to increase freedom for non-whites, but actually aims to crush it more thoroughly by a divide-and-conquer strategy. And every year brings more votes to Mr. Botha's *right-wing* opponents Jaap Marais and Andries Treurnicht, men obsessed by the idea that the Afrikaners are God's chosen people. They are the political heirs of the charming gentlemen who tried to bring South Africa into World War II on the side of Hitler.

IN COMING DAYS we will be hearing a lot from experts of many kinds concerning the complexity of the South African question, which no doubt will turn out to be greater than meets the eye. Well, it isn't. The South African question is excruciatingly simple. Indeed, there probably has not been an evil so simple since the fall of Berlin. Yes, the United States should not endanger itself or its interests. But no, the Afrikaner house of bondage is not an American interest; and neither is the spectacle of American indifference to it. The world will not be fooled. There

are various forms of moral, political, and economic heat that this great nation can bring to bear upon that low nation; and there are black institutions and individuals (the trade unions, for example) whose continued existence requires our plain and protective interest. Let's get on with it.

NOTEBOOK

□ NOT EVEN the famine in Ethiopia can perturb that real-life Dickensian Scrooge, Margaret Thatcher. An all-star rock group that goes by the name of Band Aid recorded a single, "Do They Know it's Christmas?" whose proceeds are earmarked for famine relief. In just two weeks, the record—which boasts such pop luminaries as Sting, Phil Collins, Boy George, and Duran Duran—has sold 2 ½ million copies in England alone. But Maggie refuses to relinquish the 15 percent value added tax on the record's sales. Mrs. Thatcher claims that such a special dispensation from the rigors of British taxation would be unfair to other charitable causes. Labour opponents of the Iron Lady claim the Prime Minister has a cold heart. Meanwhile, Band Aid is reportedly contemplating a follow-up single tentatively entitled "Does She Know it's Christmas?"

□ LET'S SEE. Here's the catalogue of special commemorative items offered by the Reagan second-term inaugural committee. Some terrific gift ideas here. Like a porcelain eagle which "soars to new heights in this exquisite bisque sculpture." It's cast in a "limited edition" of 500, and gee, it's only \$950. Or perhaps you'd prefer *A New Beginning: The First Four Years*, a "stunningly beautiful, hardbound edition" of something or other that allows the giftee to "share the unforgettable highlights of the Reagan Administration's first term." Or the stickpin and pendant gift set, "for the woman with style who wants to show her enthusiasm for the 50th Inauguration." Talk about Tools for Living! But aren't there some other things lying around the White House that might have been included? How about a 1984 Mondale debate briefing book, autographed by the President? Or a lovely souvenir photo album of Nicaraguan military bases? This one's nice: a distinguished service medal made for the Grenadian invasion. (Only 50,000 have been minted.) Or an official \$1,000 Defense Department screwdriver, a steal at \$500. Or Ed Meese's house: \$600,000 (2 percent financing available). And for that special someone, safety-sealed cans of toxic waste.

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "Is there a student movement in America? Certainly there is a great stir and departure from traditional points of view. But our student movement has an elderly quality about it. Its passionless slogans seem to be dictated by old men. Its congresses pass long resolutions about child labor, federal relief, war expenditures, Negro discrimination, but few of

the young men and women passing these resolutions seem to know just what sort of good life they want to be allowed to live. It is a movement of dissatisfaction with the old order of things motivated by no powerful vision of the new life. Indeed, the student radical who strikes against war is likely to be simultaneously a devoted reader of *The Saturday Evening Post*. There are in American colleges today thousands of restless young radicals whose pent-up energy awaits the release that can come only with the growth of a revolutionary political party. Only then can the energy now exerted in the fight against retrenchment, R.O.T.C., race discrimination, and fascist tendencies be released so that American students may find more certain direction and immediate purpose in their activity." ("Is There a Student Movement in America?," The Editors, January 16, 1935.)

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

RULES FOR DICTATORS

AFTER ACCUSING the Carter Administration of undermining the Shah of Iran and Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua and helping militant anti-Americans come to power, the Reaganites have their chance in the Philippines and Chile to show how they can handle perhaps the most difficult of all American foreign policy problems—that of the friendly dictator who falls afoul of his own people. In spite of the Administration's failure to sustain its military support for President Amin Gemayel in Lebanon last year—resulting in an expansion of Soviet and Syrian influence, if not the overthrow of the Lebanese government—Reagan aides remain confident of the superiority of their approach over that of the Carter Administration. Where Carter hectored, the Reaganites quietly nudge. They admit that there are parallels between the Philippines and Chile, Iran and Nicaragua, but they think there is a better chance for a happy ending during their tenure than under Carter.

The Reaganites are so self-assured, in fact, that an "iron law" is only half-facetiously being touted at the State Department. It goes as follows: friendly authoritarian regimes are more likely to survive a crisis and to move toward democracy when Republicans are in office than when Democrats are, and they are more likely to do so the less America interferes. The examples cited to support the theory are Portugal (1975), Spain (1975), and the recent Latin American successes—Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, and Uruguay. The cases of Democratic disaster include not only Nicaragua and Iran, but also Vietnam, where Presidents Kennedy and Johnson tried to Americanize the government and the war.

The theory neglects to take into account the fact that

Cuba went Communist on a Republican watch and that Spain got a constitution and survived a coup attempt under Carter. It leaves out the Eisenhower-era coups in Iran and Guatemala. It also doesn't credit the Carter Administration for saving democracy in the Dominican Republic and for promoting it in Peru, Panama, and Argentina, and it omits the fact that it took rather massive U.S. interference under Reagan to rescue Grenada. Nonetheless, the theory comforts the Reaganites as they address the challenges of Chile and the Philippines, and convinces them that they have sound rules of procedure for addressing troubled regimes.

AS DESCRIBED BY ADMINISTRATION officials, the "rules"—they are not codified, so far as I could determine—include the following. Rule 1: Friendly regimes are treated to "quiet diplomacy" as long as it is effective; when it's not, public criticism will be employed, but gingerly. Administration officials are convinced that the Carter policy of criticizing pro-American dictators about their human rights abuses helped delegitimize them and led to their downfall. They also say that public flogging reduces American influence with the regime. President Reagan finally criticized the South African government on December 10, aides say, not merely because of the pressure of public protest, but because diplomacy was not working to win the release of twenty-one black labor leaders being held incommunicado. Rule 2: The level of criticism and other pressure is related to the delicacy of the regime's condition and the danger of a victory by anti-American forces. Aides say that the President mentioned Chile in his December 10 Human Rights Day speech (as a place where "we're still doing all we can to promote democratic change") partly because quiet diplomacy had failed to influence President Augusto Pinochet to lift his state of siege and stop his policy of mass arrests, but also because Pinochet presently is in no danger of being toppled by Communists.

Administration officials do believe that Pinochet is playing into the hands of the far left over the long run by refusing to allow the country to return to democracy, and that he is creating new radicals by crushing dissent. The message has been conveyed to the government on recent visits by three high-ranking State Department officials, and through the cancellation of a scheduled visit by General John Wickham, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff. Chile's Ambassador to Washington has been repeatedly called in to receive protests and importunings, and he has complained that his country has been singled out for criticism two dozen times at State Department briefings since the state of siege was imposed on November 6.

The Administration believes it has little direct influence over Chile, which receives no U.S. economic or military aid and which cannot be sold even spare parts and safety equipment for its American-built military equipment because the Administration has refused to certify that it has made progress in human rights. Still, Administration officials say, pressure has been applied by exercising U.S. influence over loan approvals through the International

Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank. The Administration also has issued a travel advisory that warns of curfews, terrorist incidents, street demonstrations, and violent confrontations in Chile. This has little effect on the limited tourist trade to Chile, but flashes a signal to private banks and potential industrial investors that the United States has questions about the stability of the country. According to one Administration official, Chile's government certainly understands that it is being pressured, but "the difference between us and Carter is that they would have held a press conference every time they disapproved a loan. We don't."

A policy review is currently being conducted inside the Administration over how much further to go in pressing Pinochet. It is said that debate doesn't run along ideological lines, but pits optimists against pessimists—those who believe that divided democratic oppositionists can coalesce and resist Communist pressure, and those who don't.

Chile's Air Force and Navy already harbor opponents to Pinochet's repressive rule; the question for the Administration is whether to seek them out in their army as well. The purpose would certainly not be to foment a coup, but to push reform and persuade Pinochet to step aside gracefully. Administration officials say that their influence over Pinochet and their communication with the opposition have been hampered by the presence in Santiago of a right-wing political appointee, James Theberge, as U.S. Ambassador. He is about to be replaced.

OBVIOUSLY, the Reagan rules for dealing with friendly authoritarian regimes do not exclude intervention in the country's affairs. But Rule 3 holds that the intervention should support as much as possible preexisting indigenous movements for democratic reform. This rule applies especially in the Philippines, which currently bears some striking resemblances to prerevolutionary Iran and Nicaragua. Like both those countries, the Philippines is strategically located and important to U.S. interests. Like Somoza, President Ferdinand Marcos is a West Point graduate with close ties to the United States. Like the Shah and Somoza, his dictatorial rule has been rife with cronyism and corruption. As with Somoza, popular resentment against him surged with the murder of a popular opposition leader. Like both Somoza and the Shah, Marcos is seriously ill. He is believed to have a kidney ailment that most observers believe will kill him eventually. And finally, the Marcos regime, like the former Somoza regime, is under attack both from Communist guerrillas and an aroused pro-democratic middle class. As in Nicaragua, the democrats do not have guns and the Communists do.

There is one potentially crucial point where the Iran-Nicaragua parallel breaks down both for Chile and the Philippines: the latter two countries have been democracies before. Military rule was imposed in each case as a "temporary" measure justified by emergency and is not considered by the population to be the natural order of things. This encourages the Reaganites, though some of

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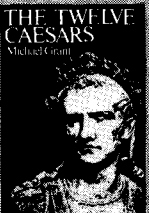
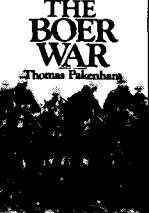
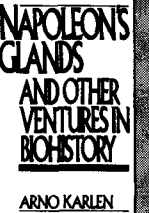
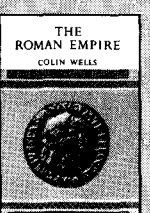
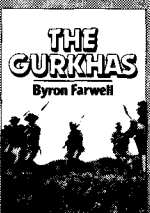
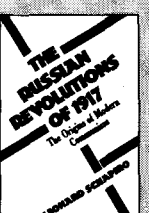
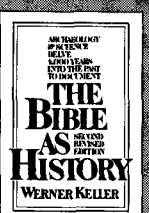
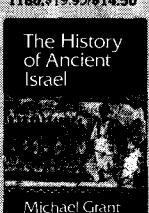
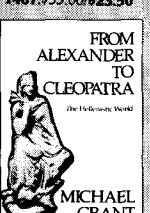
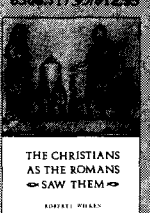
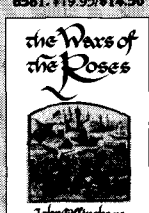
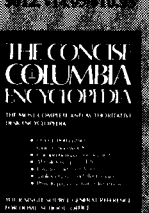
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them are worried that trends in the Philippines—such as a decline in literacy in English and Spanish—suggests that country may be turning away from its American connection and becoming merely another Third World nation.

The aim of Reagan policy there, according to Administration officials, is to support elements in Philippine society that are dedicated to a return to a democratic system such as the one the Philippines had when Marcos declared martial law in 1972. The mission has become urgent since the August 1983 murder of Benigno Aquino set off an explosion of protest against the regime. There are signs that it is working, but the situation remains very dicey—and on both counts the Administration has refrained from attacking Marcos. America's then-Ambassador, Michael Armacost, now No. 3 man in the State Department, established the direction of U.S. policy when he attended Aquino's funeral. He also conceived of the idea—ultimately adopted by Marcos, reluctantly—of appointing a Warren-style commission to investigate the murder. That commission fingered Marcos's close friend, army Chief of Staff Fabian Ver, as being responsible; Marcos relieved him of command pending court action and allowed the case to be assigned to a civilian court. Marcos has replaced Ver with General Fidel Ramos, whom even opposition leaders consider to be an honest, able soldier who is working to get his troops to fight guerrillas of the New Peoples' Army without brutalizing civilians.

Marcos also has permitted some liberalization of the political system—to the point where several newspapers openly rail at him and sixty opposition politicians ridicule him in Parliament. Armacost and his successor, Stephen Bosworth, promoted the holding of clean elections, and the U.S. Embassy is in constant contact with the opposition.

Reagan aides say that the Administration has no favorites in the struggle over Marcos's successor, but it's clear that the State Department officials hope that his wife, Imelda, will not come to power. The United States urged Marcos to sign a measure setting up a constitutional process that would keep her out of succession in the event of his death, and he did so. Candidates backed by Imelda did so poorly in parliamentary elections last May—she lost fifteen out of the twenty-one she campaigned for in metro Manila—that probably the only way Imelda could take over would be in a coup backed by Ver and others in the military. That could set off full civil war in the country, opening the way for anti-American leftists to force the United States off its bases. Obviously the Administration doesn't want that.

THE GREATEST hope of Administration officials is that Marcos will stay alive long enough to set up a stable democratic system, much as Francisco Franco did in Spain. Many officials doubt he will do so, however, and there is no way to make him. Still, the United States has much more economic leverage in the Philippines than it has in Chile—to the tune of \$220 million in aid and base payments last year, plus influence over I.M.F. and private

loans. The United States is using that influence, especially to force the breakup of agricultural monopolies controlled by Marcos cronies. Some Administration officials are worried that I.M.F. leverage is being applied so stringently that unemployment, already at 20 percent, will rise further and exacerbate the country's political instability.

Any U.S. Administration could benefit from a fourth rule in handling friendly dictators, which could be the political version of the Hippocratic Oath: "First, do no harm." In the Reagan case, high-ranking officials agree on the point. One of them said, "A lot of liberals have an attitude about the Philippines that is deeply colonial—that the United States should deliver ultimatums and force Marcos to conform. I suppose it is in our power to bring him down or cause him trouble, but it isn't in our power to construct something new. If you destabilize, you set up a situation whereby the best-organized opposition group will take power, which is often a Khomeini or a Sandinista party that ends up hurting just the people that you wanted to help." That is more or less what happened when the Democrats tried to influence pro-American dictators in Iran and Nicaragua to clean up their acts. The Reagan rules may seem permissive toward right-wing scoundrels, but if they really lead toward restoration of democracy in Chile and the Philippines, why should anyone complain?

MORTON KONDRACK

Enter the bleeding-heart conservatives.

THE POOR PERPLEX

THERE ARE NOT many attributes of the contemporary American conservative that amuse, but one of them surely is his conviction that he is in the wilderness. The country is entering its fifth year of Ronald Reagan's rule, the capital is in transports of reaction, the Democrats are in well-deserved disarray, the commentators of the conservative camp are massed in all the media, and still the fighters against liberalism pretend that theirs is a lonely fight. They praise themselves for their special courage in rising up and saying what almost everybody else is saying. Maybe the fiction is necessary; a movement come to power is a movement in danger, not least of losing the habits of militancy and mobilization that inspire a minority. Still, the movement has come to power, and the ideas and the institutions of American liberalism have been routed. The conservatives' charade is tiresome. For the past four years and the future four years, the responsibility for the moral and social development of America rests squarely on their shoulders.

Into a climate of opinion that is choking on conservative cant there have stepped, again, the Catholic bishops.

Again they have aerated it with a pastoral letter, this time on "Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy." The document certainly leaves much to be desired. It seems satisfied to oppose the conventional wisdom of the '80s with the conventional wisdom of the '60s. By this late date, however, too many defects of the Great Society have been too well documented to allow for the more or less uncritical recidivism of social policy that the bishops seem to support. Much of this documentation (presumably not all of it) is easier to refuse than to refute. The conservative critique of some of the proudest programs of the Great Society appears to have left some liberals in what Gertrude Himmelfarb, describing the perplexity of reformers and radicals in the wake of Malthusianism, calls "a mode of thought and feeling that [seems] to be intellectually irresistible and morally repulsive." Indeed, there is a sense in which the conservative critique (made most rigorously and remorselessly by Charles Murray in his book, *Losing Ground*) may be called a new Malthusianism. These conservatives would concur with the melancholy monk that "[the poor] are themselves the cause of their poverty; that the means of redress are in their own hands and in the hands of no other persons whatever." Still, many of the policy recommendations of the bishops seem too innocent of the challenges already made to them. They teach liberalism little, who teach it not to learn.

AND YET the pastoral letter has met with more than its fair measure of criticism. It has been scoffed at and scorned, misread and misrepresented. A concerted campaign has been launched against the legitimacy of the bishops' criticisms of the state of American social policy by calling them subversive. The overdriven character of the campaign was illustrated by William F. Buckley Jr., who opined that the bishops were "condemning the system" by suggesting that 35 million people in poverty is a national disgrace. It was Michael Novak, however, who was responsible for the direction of the debate. Some of Mr. Novak's accusations were rather arresting. He had the temerity to call the pastoral letter "tendentious"—this from the man who has glossed the tale of the suffering servant in Isaiah ("He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief . . . he was despised and we esteemed him not") as a parable of "the modern business corporation," which is "a much despised incarnation of God's presence in the world." (That offends a Jew, too.) And in a parody of the common conservative paroxysm, he remarked of the bishops' criticism of "our punitive attitude toward the poor" that "like the Democrats in San Francisco, [they] always blame America first." Who, pray, should be blamed for American hunger and American homelessness?

Not all of Novak's strictures were so silly. There was, for example, the charge of "statism." This solemn term has gained currency in this conservative time. By the standards of American political discourse, it is an impressive

term. It is so abstract and so analytic, so redolent of theory. Unfortunately it is usually only a fancy form of demagoguery. Consider the case of the bishops. They propose government programs. Therefore they are "statist." Now, this is not the statism of the libertarians, who suspect the very existence of government. It is the statism of the conservatives, who suspect the formative stages of communism. Friedrich Hayek is the inspiration for this particular fatuity. We are on the slippery slope again, this time to serfdom. The content of Novak's canard may be found in his critical discussion of "the ideological use of poverty" in 1981, in which the notion that poverty is "a state to be eliminated" is linked first to the "democratic totalitarianism" described by J. L. Talmon, then to Stalinism, and finally to what Novak calls "the new Constantinianism," which "appears today as socialism in totalitarian states and as statism in mixed economies." (I wasn't aware that Christians feel so coldly toward Constantine.)

NEVER MIND that the bishops roundly repudiate any such stifling social arrangements. They state straightforwardly that "the Church's teaching opposes collectivist and statist economic approaches. But it also resists the notion that an unimpeded market automatically produces justice." Not exactly the stuff of revolution, you would have thought; but these are doctrinaire days. The pastoral construction of the American political economy is not collectivist, as a reading of the text shows. It is, rather, communitarian—explicitly and eloquently communitarian. When communitarianism is criticized as a form of collectivism, however, our philosophy and our politics are in peril. All that remains is an irredentist individualism. The view that an unimpeded market automatically produces justice is rather a specific version of the hidden hand. It is the hidden hand in the shape of a fist.

To preempt the bishops' pernicious pleading for the poor, Novak produced a "Lay Letter on Catholic Social Thought and the U.S. Economy" (with William Simon, Alexander Haig, Peter Grace, and others). There it is rightly observed that there is no contradiction between capitalism and compassion; or, as the letter notes about Adam Smith, between *The Theory of the Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations*. Novak takes the lesson from Gertrude Himmelfarb's treatment of Smith in her recent study *The Idea of Poverty*, a brilliant introduction to the theory and the practice of social policy in the industrial age. Novak fails to mention, however, the most surprising features of Smith's analysis, in Himmelfarb's account. It seems that Smith allowed two infringements on the market's freedom. One was government relief for the poor; the other was taxation for the purpose of such relief. Precisely the *bêtes noires* of contemporary American conservatism.

It is not merely capitalism, then, for which Novak et Al Haig speak. They speak, rather, for capitalism most cruelly constructed. Nor is it exactly for what they call "democratic capitalism," that most sly semantic silencer of criticism. Who is for undemocratic capitalism? Nobody east of Deng Xiaoping, surely. Not the bishops. Not the Great

Society. Not the New Deal. Or is it before democratic socialism that the conservatives tremble? If so, they are the first. Yes, capitalism is the economic system that has presided over more freedom and more prosperity than any other economic system in history. Perhaps I should say it again. Yes, capitalism is the economic system that has presided over more freedom and more prosperity than any other economic system in history. Now may we please discuss the destitute in its midst?

The bishops and their critics generally agree on the moral and material power of American capitalism. They disagree about its relationship to social conscience. When William Buckley infers an attack upon our political economy from an arraignment of its failures, it is the structure of social conscience that eludes him. For what is that structure, if not that the failures of the minority tell upon the fairness of the majority? It is obvious; or it used to be. The conscience is not an organ of praise. It is an organ of blame. When it is asked to praise, it is silenced. And when it is silenced, a society decays. The argument that it is morally and intellectually more correct to celebrate the good fortune of the many than to condemn the bad fortune of the few is really an argument for the delegitimation of social conscience. It is made by those of little faith in our order. Those with faith fasten upon the few.

But the social programs have failed, claim the conservatives. Well, then, design new ones. As you would design a new machine, for example, if an old machine failed. What of that sublime thing, the entrepreneurial imagination? Why doesn't misery motivate it as much as money? In the field of social policy, however, the idolaters of innovation will take no for an answer. And still they cry foul at the suggestion that their politics lacks conscience. Charles Murray, for example, concludes his deeply disturbing book with the idea of "scrapping the entire federal welfare and income-support structure for working-aged persons, including A.F.D.C., Medicaid, Food Stamps, Unemployment Insurance, Worker's Compensation, subsidized housing, disability insurance, and the rest." Murray claims to have shown that none of these programs have eliminated these dependencies. Maybe; I do not know how to do the numbers. I do know that there are dependencies that cannot be eliminated, that are simply varieties of suffering. More important, I do not see that there is any difference between a person with a social conscience who cannot find a single welfare program to support and a person without a social conscience. In economics, the burden of proof may be on the liberals; in morality, it is on the conservatives.

TO BE SURE, there are conservatives who care about the poor; Jack Kemp appears to be one. But the debate this time has produced an interesting new phenomenon: the bleeding-heart conservative. This is the conservative who protests that his economic policy and his social policy are designed not for the rich but for the poor. A rising tide lifts all boats, the saying goes; and the ocean floor is littered with hulls whose sinking crews could not have disa-

greed. It is faint praise, but there was a time not long ago when conservatives told the indecent truth. George Gilder wrote candidly of "the spur of poverty," and Michael Novak admitted that "poverty and famine have been the perennial condition of mankind." Conservatives have always been able to live with the fact of poverty; it is part of that facticity of life before which they bend the knee. They are, as Michael Oakeshott put it, "averse from change, which appears always, in the first place, as deprivation." Happy is the man for whom change means deprivation. The poverty with which conservatives can live, in short, is always somebody else's. At least it can be said for the bleeding-heart liberal that his heart really bled.

LEON WIESELTIER

Iranian terrorism hijacks U.S. influence.

UNDECLARED WAR

THE PURPOSE of the hijacking of a Kuwait Airlines plane on December 4 by radical fundamentalist Muslims was clear enough. They hoped to win the release of seventeen fundamentalists convicted of bombing the French and American embassies a year earlier and subsequently held in Kuwaiti jails. But why, if the hijackers sought concessions from Kuwait, did they kill only American passengers, not Kuwaitis? Kuwait faced a difficult choice of whether or not to release the prisoners, but Washington faced no ultimatum, no deadline, no choice at all. Why then did the hijackers go out of their way to stage mock trials of American passengers, and to condemn, torture, and execute them?

The hijackers' purpose was larger and more basic than forcing changes in specific U.S. policies. It was to eliminate the very presence of the U.S. in the Middle East. The hijackers are part of a radical Islamic fringe, largely directed from Iran, which places a high priority on the extirpation of Western civilization from their region. They are prepared to use almost any means to achieve this end.

Few people pursue political goals more alien to Westerners than the fundamentalist Muslims. Their conception of public life emerges from two main thoughts. The first is the dichotomy between the Islamic and the non-Islamic: this applies to food, culture, people, and governments. The second is the burden of the Muslim decline from centuries past to the present. Glories of the medieval period are vividly remembered and compared to the predicament faced today. Obsessed with the backwardness, poverty, and weakness of God's faithful in contrast to the success of Westerners, fundamentalists are determined to make the Muslims great once again.

Fundamentalists who ascribe the Muslims' tribulations

today to misguided efforts at emulating the West, view the ways of the West as seductive and evil. Their goal, accordingly, is to remove the temptations of Western civilization—everything from music and sexual customs to businesses—from the purview of Muslims. The United States stands out among the Western countries. This is due in part to its dynamism, the moral tone of its foreign policy, and its unparalleled economic, military, and political power. It is also due to its cultural preeminence: America exports fashions and technical advances, popular customs and influential ideas.

ALTHOUGH THE WIDE appeal of American culture disturbs all fundamentalists, few of them are in a position to combat it. Only in Iran, where a full-fledged fundamentalist leadership has gained power, can fundamentalists methodically address the issue of the American cultural threat. Indeed, Ashgar Musavi Khomeini, leader of the 1979 attack on the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, recently defined the main objective of the Iranian revolution as the "rooting out" of American culture in Muslim countries.

But how to do so? Diplomatic, economic, moral, and other methods of peaceful persuasion cannot work, for Americans obviously will not readily pack up and leave the Middle East. Khomeini's followers therefore resort to coercion; and the coercive means most suitable for them is terrorism. Terror eradicates differences in power between Iran and the United States, and it enables Tehran to take steps not available to Washington.

Although every terrorist act against Americans cannot be directly or unequivocally connected to the Iranian government, circumstantial evidence compellingly suggests that strong ties exist between Tehran and the radical fundamentalist groups throughout the Middle East. Khomeini's regime began aiding these organizations soon after it came to power. Foremost among them are Ad-Da'wa in Iraq; the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain; and three parties in Lebanon: Hizbullah (Party of God) and shadowy organizations called Islamic Jihad and Islamic Amal. In the words of a Hizbullah leader in Lebanon: "Khomeini is our big chief. He gives the orders to our chiefs, who give them to us. We don't have a precise chief, but a committee." The regional movements do not hide the inspiration Khomeini provides. A member of Hizbullah was recently quoted as saying, "Our slogan is 'death to America in the Islamic world.'" More succinct is the graffiti found on many walls in Beirut: "We are all Khomeini."

Iran and the Lebanese fundamentalists agree on the value of terror against the United States. Husayn Musavi, leader of Islamic Amal, called the 1983 attack on the Marine barracks "a good deed." For its part, the media in Tehran portrayed this attack as an act of "popular resistance," and the Iranian government conspicuously avoided condemning this and other suicide attacks. In the Kuwait Airlines hijacking, collusion between the Iranian government and the terrorists appears a virtual certainty.

A pattern emerges as anti-American incidents recur.

Not surprisingly, the American government looms largest as the fundamentalists' enemy. American embassies have therefore been the victim of choice for fundamentalists' attacks—the one in Tehran occupied twice, the one in Kuwait bombed once, the one in Beirut bombed twice. The U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut were destroyed. An attempt to blow up the United States Embassy in Rome was foiled in early November by the Italian police.

But other major American institutions are also important targets. Note the affiliation of the four Americans plucked off the streets of Beirut during the past year and taken hostage: a political officer at the U.S. Embassy, a correspondent for the Cable News Network, a Presbyterian minister, and a university librarian. The American government, media, churches, and universities are considered threatening by Iran and its agents. "We are not afraid of economic sanctions or military intervention," Khomeini explains. "What we are afraid of is Western universities." Fundamentalists kidnapped David Dodge, president of the American University in Beirut, in July 1982 and held him for a year; Dodge's successor, Malcolm Kerr, was assassinated in January 1984.

There is every reason to expect such aggression to continue and even accelerate. In November 1984 a member of Islamic Jihad threatened to "blow up all American interests in Lebanon. . . . We address this warning to every American individual residing in Lebanon." The likely victims will include those already attacked as well as a significant addition—multinational corporations. Their widespread presence in the Middle East, their exposed position, and their controversial activities are likely to make them an irresistible mark for radical fundamentalists.

The effects of more attacks will be deeply felt. Commercial organizations will leave as soon as the expense and effort of coping with terrorism exceeds the benefits to be gained by staying. Embassies, churches, schools, and news bureaus have no such clear measure; they will presumably remain longer in the Middle East, but only by becoming more discreet and adding multiple layers of protection around themselves. Such protection works but it also diminishes the effectiveness of these institutions—exactly what the fundamentalists strive for.

FUNDAMENTALIST terrorism represents a new challenge for Americans. Precisely because the goals of the fundamentalist Muslims are so sweeping, strategies against the Iranian campaign of terror are difficult to formulate. Appeasement, usually the wrong response anyway, is out of the question. The United States government cannot abandon the Middle East, much less force American citizens to do so. And the vast majority of Muslims in the Middle East do not want Americans to depart.

What steps can the United States take to prevent further incidents? To begin with, three considerations rule out a direct strike against Iran. First, the United States cannot take actions that risk bringing the Soviet Union into Iran, for this would facilitate Soviet control of the Persian Gulf and render that region's oil flow even more vulnerable

than it already is. Washington cannot take chances supporting provincial rebels or exiled opposition groups whose activities might lead to Iran's territorial disintegration. However obnoxious the Ayatollah's policies, the American interest in keeping the Soviets out requires that the government in Tehran retain firm control over the entire country.

Second, Iranian military targets are out-of-bounds. Attacking them would mean in effect joining Iraq's war effort against Iran, which would align Washington with the aggressor in the Iraq-Iran war and push Iran further into the Soviet camp; and, far from reducing acts of terror against American citizens, cooperation with Saddam Hussein, Khomeini's mortal enemy, would increase them. For these reasons, all Iranian targets with military value, regardless how insignificant or remote, and all important economic facilities, such as the oil-exporting port of Kharg Island, must be inviolate.

Third, the United States is restricted by its own standards of morality; it cannot imitate the Iranians and strike out blindly against civilians.

These three reasons effectively prohibit any American action against Iran. However, if Iran itself escapes retaliation, its agents abroad—and especially those in Lebanon—need not. Radical fundamentalist Muslims under Iranian control have been present in the Baalbek region of Lebanon since December 1979. They now devote most of their efforts to establishing an Islamic republic along Iranian lines in the Baalbek area. According to the Lebanese newspaper *An-Nahar*, Hizbullah had at its disposal about three thousand fighters in September 1983 in the Bekaa valley, which includes Baalbek; recent estimates put its numbers at about five thousand.

The anarchic conditions of Lebanon made Baalbek an ideal base for Iranian terror. Hizbullah is connected to the September 1984 bombing of the embassy in Beirut, the bombing in Kuwait, and the hijacking of the Kuwait Airways plane. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for both explosions at the embassy in Beirut, the bombing of the Marine barracks, and the failed effort in Italy.

Striking the radical fundamentalists in Baalbek avoids the risks associated with striking Iran itself. It would not destabilize the government in Tehran, and the Iranians in Lebanon are not involved in the war with Iraq. But they are actively engaged in terror. Though not the ultimate source of anti-American activity, the Baalbek facilities are its most immediate agent.

THE UNITED STATES has often threatened retaliation against the radical fundamentalists, but has not yet carried through. As correspondent Philip Taubman explained in *The New York Times* on October 5, "practical and policy reasons" prevented a retaliatory strike on Hizbullah for its role in the September 1984 bombing in Beirut. Taubman reported that intelligence aides had advised against an air strike because Hizbullah's leaders and followers never assemble in one place, and any strike would risk killing innocent civilians. A ground attack was ruled out

because of the difficulty of introducing commandos into Baalbek. In any case, there was "a widespread belief among Mr. Reagan's aides that a retaliatory strike against the Party of God [Hizbullah] or Iran would only produce an escalation in terrorist attacks against the United States."

These reasons for inaction no longer suffice. If the United States lacks the capabilities for air strikes or commando raids, these must be developed immediately. The enemy's practice of surrounding himself with innocents cannot be allowed to inhibit all American use of force. And the fear of provoking more terrorist attacks carries no weight in the aftermath of the Tehran hijacking outrage.

Only by establishing that a heavy price will be exacted for every injury to Americans will terrorists be discouraged from further atrocities. Secretary of State George P. Shultz has taken pains to prepare the way politically for just this sort of action. Punishment of those who are most implicated and most vulnerable—those in the Baalbek region—presents the best opportunity to protect Americans and their interests in the Middle East.

DANIEL PIPES

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The failure of Pinochet's 'hard hand.'

CHILE SCENES OF SUMMER

Santiago

EACH NIGHT NOW, as darkness falls over Santiago's La Avenida de Bernardo O'Higgins, soldiers begin to take up positions every few hundred yards. Their helmets, combat fatigues, and automatic rifles are an intimidating sight; street vendors close their stands and the few straggling commuters shove their way onto buses. Well before the midnight curfew, the avenue is empty. Neon billboards blink out over nothing but the soldiers and their guns. There is a penetrating silence in the city's center, broken only by the low rumble of military trucks and, on some nights, by the sudden noise of a bomb or burst of gunfire.

On November 6, General Augusto Pinochet declared a ninety-day state of siege, abruptly reversing the effects of fifteen months of relative political liberalization. The stark, enforced order is more eloquent than any official declaration. The glaring broadsides of the opposition media have been torn down, and the insistent calls for democracy by the regime's political opponents have been silenced. Pinochet has closed six opposition magazines, applied heavy

censorship to the rest of the media, and strictly limited the right of free assembly. Hundreds of political activists have been arrested and sentenced to internal exile in remote parts of the country, and troops have conducted mass raids on restive working-class neighborhoods. In a few short weeks, Pinochet managed to drive Chile's strong Marxist left underground, silence the rest of his opposition, and stifle the rounds of nationwide demonstrations that have plagued his government since May 1983. "The people asked me for the hard hand, and I gave it," he said recently with evident satisfaction.

THE OFFICIAL explanation of the crackdown is that it is necessary to combat leftist terrorist groups, who over the last year had stepped up a campaign of sabotage bombings and occasional shootings. But even longtime government supporters recognize that Pinochet's strategy amounts to more than that. "He is trying to eliminate every reasonable alternative to his rule," said one right-wing leader. "He wants to make the country choose between him and the Communist Party."

Virtually no politician or diplomat believes that the tactics will work, either in suppressing the terrorist groups or in stabilizing the government. "It's like giving morphine to a sick patient," said Andrés Allernand, a conservative activist. "The government could destroy itself," said Genaro Arriagada, an opposition political scientist. "Or, it could destroy the rational political alternatives."

Opposition leaders like to portray the state of siege as the only recourse left to a desperate authoritarian regime. But in fact, Pinochet was far from cornered. Though a one-day national strike called by unions and the Communist-led Democratic Popular Movement (M.D.P.) in late October was surprisingly successful, anti-government forces have in many ways weakened during the last year. In part, the opposition has suffered from effective government repression, and in part from petty internal squabbling. The main problem has been the failure of Chile's Communists, Christian Democrats, and rightists to agree on how to put an end to military rule, or on what kind of political system should follow. As their infighting has grown increasingly bitter, Pinochet has only seemed to grow stronger.

But Pinochet is not interested simply in quelling public insurrection. Since 1980, when a new national constitution was approved in a questionably managed plebiscite, Pinochet has been committed to a political project that will keep him in office until at least 1989, and that will ensure that the Marxist left, the object of the 1973 military coup against elected Socialist President Salvador Allende, never again comes to power.

All along, Pinochet's problem has been that the centrist and leftist sectors of Chile's civilian society have refused to accept either his continued rule (under constitutional provisions, his term could be extended until 1997) or his plans for a "protected" democracy, which would exclude leftist movements and grant exceptional powers to the armed forces. Government strategists know that although the left

by itself could perhaps be suppressed, their political model will not work unless it is accepted by middle-class sectors represented by centrist parties like the Christian Democrats.

The new repression is intended not to eradicate all opposition or to preserve a tottering government, but to split centrist movements from the left and force them to accept Pinochet's rule and a future guided by the military. Interior Minister Sergio Onofre Jarpa sought the same result in fifteen months of relative political liberalization. But after loosening restrictions on the press and political organizations late last year, Jarpa was unable to win concessions either from Pinochet or from centrist parties, which would have allowed a negotiated settlement between center and right. With the logic of a military strategist, Pinochet appears to have decided that a dose of force can accomplish what politics cannot.

Indeed, the first month of the crackdown appeared to be guided by careful political calculation. While ruthlessly uprooting networks of leftist organizers from urban neighborhoods and reestablishing tight control over the media, government authorities sought to accommodate centrist opponents and to minimize the potential damage to Pinochet's own civilian political base. Thus, though thousands of troops were deployed throughout southern Santiago in late November to halt protests clandestinely organized by the opposition, no protestors were killed by security forces—for the first time since mass anti-government demonstrations began nineteen months ago. Though arrest warrants and raids by secret police have driven leftist leaders underground, no major political figure has yet been arrested, and centrist politicians have been left undisturbed. The Christian Democratic Party has received particularly sensitive treatment: its downtown Santiago office has not been touched, and the Christian Democratic-oriented radio station and magazine have been censored, but not closed.

GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES clearly hope that rightists and their key supporters in the middle class will accept this tailored repression in exchange for an end to the terrorist violence and generalized political turmoil of the last year. In some respects, the calculation is probably sound; many Chileans are weary of the hundreds of bombings and seemingly fruitless protests in which more than a hundred persons have already been killed. Yet the more insistently government spokesmen have described Chile's new "tranquility" in the last month, the more the nation has seemed to seethe. Though mostly unreported in the national press, terrorist attacks have actually appeared to increase since the state of siege was declared. Bombings during November occurred at the rate of about twenty per week. Meanwhile, the disappearance of political news from the press has provoked a whirlwind of rumors so widespread and intense that the sense of political tension has seemed to increase rather than disappear. General Fernando Matthei, the commander in chief of the Air Force, recently felt obliged to announce at a press

conference that, contrary to the word in the streets, he was neither dead nor gravely ill nor under house arrest.

Two other factors have eroded the government's strategy. The regime initiated a seemingly gratuitous series of official measures against the Roman Catholic Church, including the censorship of several public statements by Santiago Archbishop Juan Francisco Fresno. Fresno, a conservative who normally avoids open confrontation with the military, was moved to dispatch a pastoral letter to be read in all churches that described Pinochet's measures as "a grave reverse for understanding and peace." And the state of siege has coincided with the collapse of the government's efforts to revive Chile's stricken economy, which is burdened with 25 percent unemployment and one of Latin America's most serious foreign debt problems. After a brief upturn early this year, the economy now appears headed into a new recession, and businessmen who normally support the government are publicly blaming the downturn on erratic policies and feuding among Pinochet's ministers.

The result is that the government crackdown has all but produced the opposite result, at least in political terms, from what was intended. Not only have centrist opposition leaders refused to back away from their rejection of the military, but key supporters of the government have turned against its policies. Three right-wing political parties, including the prestigious National Party, have issued statements calling for an end to the state of siege, and a highly respected conservative leader, Francisco Bulnes, resigned from his post on a government political council.

Diplomatic pressure, particularly from the Reagan Administration, has also evidently been heavier than the government expected. Secretary of State George Shultz publicly deplored the crackdown a week after it began, and in late November, Deputy Assistant Secretary James Michel arrived in Santiago for a round of private meetings with several high government officials.

The Reagan Administration, the Chilean right, and moderate sectors of the armed forces would all like Pinochet to return to the strategy of offering gradual political liberalization in exchange for acceptance of his government. In particular, U.S. officials have reportedly pressured the government to revive plans to create some kind of congress to serve under Pinochet's presidency. Their hope is that such an initiative would be at least passively accepted by the Christian Democrats and other centrists, opening the way for a de facto re-creation of the U.S.-backed center-right alliance which originally brought the military to power. This time, U.S. strategists believe, the alliance could be used to fashion a compromise "peaceful transition" to democracy that satisfied some opposition demands but kept the left frozen out.

NEITHER PINOCHET nor his opposition, however, seem particularly interested in indirect peacemaking. Even moderate opposition leaders say they have concluded that it is impossible to bargain with the aging general; they are also unwilling to break alliances with the left

or to accept a permanent ban on the Communists. Pinochet, for his part, has publicly declared that he will accept no changes in his constitution, no changes in his mandate, and no conciliation with anyone who doesn't accept both.

No one in Chile seems to see any reasonable way out of the nation's predicament. The most common prognosis is that the political impasse—with or without a state of siege—will continue for the foreseeable future, and that the violence will gradually escalate. "People are losing hope," said Arriagada. "Pinochet and the Communists are destroying the democrats, and no one seems able to offer an alternative solution."

JACKSON DIEHL

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Norman Thomas, dignified democrat.

A SOCIALIST'S CENTENNIAL

NORMAN THOMAS always reminded me of my grandfather, Patrick Richard Fitzgibbon. It wasn't just that both were big men physically, though no doubt that had something to do with it. On the surface, in fact, they were thoroughly dissimilar: the all-American Ohio boy who became valedictorian of the Princeton class of '05 and then a Presbyterian clergyman before entering radical politics; and the Irish immigrant, grade school dropout, and saloonkeeper who worked his way up to a three-story house with a rose garden in St. Louis. Norman Thomas was a third-generation Republican who became a Socialist. I know for a moral certainty that my grandfather could never have voted for him in either incarnation. It never occurred to Patrick Richard Fitzgibbon to support anyone in any election but the Democrat.

No, the similarity between them was deeper. Both of them had a certain largeness of spirit, a serene sense of self—an "inner-directedness," in David Riesman's phrase. Thinking about Norman Thomas on the centennial of his birth—he was born one hundred years ago November 20—I think first of those personal qualities he shared with my grandfather, and of the epoch that for all its injustices was hospitable to such qualities. Have we broken the mold that made men like these? Has the evolution of our society turned their brand of nobility into an irrelevance?

Norman Thomas was a citizen, an eminently public man who never held public office. His own moral authority was office enough, as he traveled the country from picket line to meeting hall to street corner, speaking for civil liberties, for the rights of labor, for peace, for tolerance. From the

days of World War I to those of Vietnam—he eloquently opposed both wars—his voice was heard. How many meetings did I attend with him? I have no idea, but the first one was in 1951, when I was with Dorothy Day’s Catholic Worker movement and he was speaking in solidarity with striking workers in Franco’s Spain. One of the last was at an early rally against the Vietnam War, in Washington, in the fall of 1965. He was 84; he had long before reached the age when a firebrand becomes, by virtue of simple survival, an institution. We were down by the Washington Monument, and while he waited to speak he seemed almost to nod off. I looked at him worriedly, because he looked so old and so frail. When he was called to the lectern, he walked up to it with some difficulty. But then he looked out at the audience and—in that booming, prophetic voice of his—Norman Thomas talked sense in the tones of impassioned reasonableness.

Yes, Thomas was heard. But even in his heyday, the potential for his kind of exemplary citizenship had begun to decline. Two recent and excellent books—Sean Wilentz’s account of the workers’ movement in the first half of the nineteenth century, *Chants Democratic*, and Nick Salvatore’s *Eugene V. Debs, Citizen and Socialist*—offer some insights into that. The republican artisans described in Wilentz’s study lived in a political-class community in which tactics and even first principles were debated with great vigor and enthusiasm. The story Wilentz tells does not have a happy ending. If the New York Working Men’s movement was “the first case study of a lower-class insurgency that emerged through the cracks in the party system,” it was also destined to “be beset by invasion, deflection, co-optation, and eventual ruin at the hands of outsiders and their radical pawns.” The scenario of rebellion followed by co-optation, one might ruefully note, overtook Debs and his movement too. For even though the radical artisanate of the early nineteenth century had long since vanished by the time Debs came on the scene, something of its spirit still survived.

As Salvatore describes that spirit, “The faith of Debs and his followers in the redemptive power of the ballot is, from a current perspective, simply staggering. They took the republican tradition seriously and stressed the individual dignity and power inherent in the concept of citizenship. While frequently vague over exactly how to transform their society, these men and women had no doubt but that, if the people united, the vitality of that tradition would point the way.” These were the people—many of them not Socialists—who came to Debs’s meetings and listened raptly to speeches that routinely lasted for more than two hours.

It was a different America without mass communications, an America in which a political meeting was also a social event, even a mode of recreation. When Debs traveled on the Red Special in the 1912 campaign, he introduced reform proposals to millions of people, proposals that were, in part, enacted into law under Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s. The New Deal did indeed carry out many of the “immediate program” planks of the 1912 Socialist platform—but it carried them out, Norman Thomas used to say ruefully, “on a stretcher”—i.e., in a way that conserved as much of the old order as possible.

When Norman Thomas made his impact upon American

life—above all in the 1932 campaign, which made him a significant national figure—that Debsian audience still existed. Moreover, the beginning of the communication revolution was at hand in the form of radio. Thomas—with his slightly raspy midwestern voice, which could flow easily between sarcasm and warmth—used the new medium brilliantly. But his natural audience now responded to another magnificent voice—that of Thomas’s contemporary, Franklin Roosevelt. And the Socialists, Thomas included, proceeded to make a fatal mistake: they counterposed themselves to the political movement of the American working class which supported the New Deal. (My wisdom on this count is a function of hindsight. I suspect I would have militantly favored the error I now criticize.)



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Thomas was relentlessly critical of Roosevelt—driving the point home, for example, that the New Deal was a poor answer to unemployment, which persisted at 15 percent until war production finally conquered it. That criticism, like practically every criticism Thomas and his comrades made of Roosevelt, was true—and could have been made more effectively from within the Democratic Party. Indeed, one of the reasons why the Communists were far more successful politically than the Socialists during this period was that Moscow, for its own reasons, ordered its American troops into a united front with Roosevelt. That—plus the fact that they had a dedicated and talented cadre—allowed them to make very real progress in the unions, the community organizations, and the Democratic Party of the time, while the Socialist base all but disintegrated. During the last decade of his life, Thomas came to the conclusion that Socialists should constitute themselves as part of the Democrats' labor-liberal wing. But by then the destruction of American socialism as a significant political movement had already taken place.

I rehearse this sad story for a present and future purpose. I think that the mass society of the postwar years did indeed break the Norman Thomas (and Patrick Richard Fitzgibbon) mold. Within the working class there are no longer (in C. Wright Mills's term) "publics"—political communities in which genuine dialogue is possible. There have been exceptions, of course. Martin Luther King Jr.'s movement was rich in oratory and had a vivid—sometimes self-destructive—internal life. So, in a sense, did another movement, an ironic and unworthy heir of the tradition of lower-class insurgency: George Wallace's racist campaign of 1968. It's sobering to remember that Wallace had a much greater appeal that year than Norman Thomas did in 1932.

STILL, MY POINT HOLDS. The radical republican notion of "citizenship," which both Debs and Thomas incarnated, is disappearing. America has become more homogenized by mass society; it has lost very many of those "little republics" Jefferson said would be a bulwark against tyranny and a guarantee of liberty. The grandchildren of men and women who once stayed late into the night at the Grange hall or the union hall, talking intensely with each other about what kind of society they wanted to build, now stay home watching TV. If they participate at all in shaping their collective future, it is most likely by opening a computer-generated envelope from some committee in New York or Washington and then—if the committee is lucky—writing a check in response. We no longer have little republics; instead, we have interest groups. The two are not the same. Is it remotely conceivable that a Presidential campaign of the 1980s could give rise to a Gene Debs or a Norman Thomas? Can one imagine the candidate's pollsters allowing him to proclaim, "While there is a lower class, I am of it" (to say nothing of "While there is a soul in prison, I am not free"), or letting the candidate defend the rights

of Japanese-Americans in the wake of Pearl Harbor?

This loss has not been suffered by Socialists only; it affects all Americans. I remember a Madison Square Garden rally in the late 1950s, sponsored by the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy. Norman Thomas spoke, of course. But so did Alf Landon, the Republican candidate for President in 1936. (He carried just two more states than Thomas did.) What the Republican and the Socialist shared, I think, was a certain sense of citizenship, of cantankerous independence, and it did not seem at all strange for them to be on the same platform. Landon is still very much alive but that doesn't change the fact that the mold has been broken, that the society as it is now structured will not give sustenance to such men. (Or such women—one thinks of Margaret Sanger, who possessed the same confident independence.)

WHAT ABOUT Thomas's political heritage? Is it as lost as the remarkable human type he represented? Not at all. What is required is that the lesser men and women who come after him find ways to democratize communication and information, to change the new society, not simply to accept it. The private control of a growing intellectual and communications technology is as hostile to democracy as the elite ownership of the commanding heights of the economy. For all the great expectations held out for decentralization and deregulation, political reality remains limited to who and what get certified by ABC, CBS, and NBC. And there we truly have (to paraphrase something Lane Kirkland rather unfairly said in another context) three Liberaces playing the same piano.

If the "natural" processes of our social life are not going to give rise to a new Norman Thomas, then the rest of us are going to have to see to it that Thomas's spirit can reappear in new form. The next time the left has some power—and that day (I will enigmatically note) is much closer than many think in this depressing year—it must make the democratization of technology one of its central issues. Why not ban all private, paid political television time? Why not socialize the cost of providing every serious candidate with equal access to television and radio? Why not empower unemployed steel workers so that they can hire experts and buy computer time in order to come up with a counterplan for their industry and region? Why not, in short, open up new lines of communication and information that move from the bottom to the top, rather than the other way around?

Such measures will not bring back Norman Thomas. Nothing will. But they might make it possible for that independent and craggy spirit of his to become a force in the society once again. His like will never come again; but perhaps his day will.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

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Robert Dole and the false dawn of 'moderation.'

THE REPUBLICAN UNDEAD

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

ASPECTER is haunting Reagan—the specter of Republicanism.

All the wizards of the new conservatism have entered into an alliance to exorcise this specter: Meese and Kirkpatrick, Gilder and Gingrich, Heritage Foundation and political action committees. In 1984 Ronald Reagan disdained to conceal his aims. The ancient A.D.A.er never evoked the glorious past of the Grand Old Party. He ran for reelection as the true heir of Roosevelt. Reagan—not Walter Mondale—was the ultimate “real” Democrat. “It’s morning in America again,” proclaimed his television ads, echoing the Rooseveltian optimism. Reagan, declining to detail his future policies, declared: “You ain’t seen nothin’ yet.” But after his victory he offered no conservative version of F.D.R.’s second New Deal.

“Yet” arrived before Christmas, and, as promised, the American people were vouchsafed a vision of nothin’. The Tuesday Team gave way to the Doomsday Team, David Stockman’s budget-cutters, and calls for austerity replaced denunciations of Mondale’s “gloom and doom.” Reagan’s landslide triumph had made the Democrats disappear, but not the deficit. The Administration’s thematic vital signs started to go flat. It’s nightfall in America again.

The regular Republicans, supposedly consigned to the dustbin of history by the conservative “revolution,” struggled to their feet. Unsteadily at first, then with a loud, firm tread, they began marching toward the cameras. One after another they came—Dole of Kansas, Lugar of Indiana, Packwood of Oregon, Chafee of Rhode Island. . . . They had stayed the course. In the Senate the regulars elected Dole majority leader, suppressing a conservative insurgency, and took control of every open post within the Republican caucus.

This is their moment, partly because for fifty years the federal deficit has been their issue, despite the fact that whenever they strenuously campaigned on the question, they lost. It’s an issue whose time has come and gone and come again, brought back from the shadows by a Republican President who has fostered the biggest debt ever. By dispensing with traditional G.O.P. nostrums, Reagan promised, among other things, to produce a budget surplus. Having failed at this feat, he is stuck with a “second New Deal” that is taking on the coloration of the “real” Republicanism. It would be an exaggeration to say that the regular Republicans have come back to life, because their reemergence in the Senate has been caused by the pecu-

liarities of that body, not by any change in the political balance of the country. But if they are not exactly alive, neither are they as dead as they had seemed to be as recently as the 1984 Republican Convention. They are something in between: the politically undead.

Conservatives, meanwhile, are experiencing rage. They believe they won the election and the traditionalists have usurped power. “What happened to ‘morning’?” wonders Vin Weber, a young activist in the House. To the conservatives, who insist that economic growth will shrink the deficit, it seems that Mondale is the victor, with his name changed to Dole. “I never thought growth would deal with the deficit,” says Dole. “Mondale’s view of it was all right. He was the wrong salesman.”

The fissure between conservatives and regulars has several fault lines. It is a split between the ascendant Senate majority and a House caucus, the Conservative Opportunity Society, a minority within a minority. In the Senate the party controls the strategic levers, whereas in the House the movement group is stymied by a Democratic majority. The split is also a difference between political generations, between older men who have felt the fear of political extinction and younger men whose careers have paralleled the Reagan rise. Finally, the split is doctrinal. Eliminating the deficit is at the center of the traditionalists’ world view. They seek a fiscal stringency that attempts at least the appearance of equal sacrifice. The conservatives, however, want only to cut social programs. For them, the deficit is both an opportunity and a danger. Ironically, Reagan’s policies have created an impasse that makes possible his goal of negative government. The deficit has become an instrument of conservative social policy, just as it was once a mechanism for liberal social policy. But its enormous size calls into doubt the credibility of supply-side economics, the conservative claim to the mantle of growth and optimism. If tax cuts don’t increase revenues or investment, as advertised, but do increase deficits, supply-side economics may turn out to be mainly a stimulus for the traditionalist position. Unlike the conservatives, the regulars are not opposed to government in principle. “There are people in the New Right who feel the government should defend the shores and deliver the mail and that’s it. That’s it. You won’t find anyone like that in the Republican Senate leadership,” says Senator John Heinz, newly elected chairman of the Republican Senate Campaign Committee. The traditionalists want to make

government run more efficiently, like a well-organized business. Their conservatism is the impulse to reform and conserve yesterday's liberalism. Their stance is based less on an explicit creed than on an implicit disposition. A movement located beyond the bounds of the party is foreign to them.

This burst of Republicanism may be the rise before the fall. In 1986 twenty-two G.O.P. Senators face reelection. A net loss of only four seats turns the Senate over to the Democrats. In this century there have been six mid second-term elections. In no instance did the party holding the White House lose fewer than four Senate seats. Moreover, after 1986, the approaching Republican Convention will assume greater force. If the regulars can't translate their strength from the Senate caucus to the convention they will be reinterred once again. Their reign may be a short-lived phenomenon—the wave of the past. For the moment, though, they hold sway.

THE REPUBLICAN ASSERTION in the Senate is quite traditional. Dole's rise and the capture of the committee chairmanship by the regulars was hardly a break with the past. Dole is the latest of a line that stretches back to Robert Taft, the conservative midwestern Senate baron, who could never transfer his strength from the Congressional caucus to the G.O.P. Convention. He was beaten time and again by Thomas Dewey's political network, which ran from governor's mansions to clubhouses. While the Taftites ruled the Senate, the Deweyites won the Presidential nominations. Even the 1964 Draft Goldwater movement was rooted among former Young Republicans trained in the Dewey operation. When Reagan became President, there were few true Reaganites in the Senate. The two Senators who ran against him in the 1980 primaries, Howard Baker and Dole, had gone nowhere; like Taft, they prospered in the institutional setting, not among the broad electorate. The Senate regulars are a fusion of latter-day Taftites and Deweyites, whose differences have been muted in the face of the newer brand of conservatism, regionally based in the Sun Belt, where Republicans have a shallow history. In the states of greatest conservative strength, the G.O.P. is a novel party for volatile voters.

The "moderate" wing of the Republican Party depends upon the logic of the old two-party system for its sustenance. The "moderates" represent states with big cities, smokestack industries, and diverse ethnic groups; the parties are fixed elements. "The Democratic Party in Pennsylvania is the party of political bosses," says Senator Heinz. "That creates great opportunity for any Republican." With a machine Democrat as an opponent, the Republican can pose efficiency against patronage. "Good government" Republicans like Heinz must temper their partisan appeals in order to attract Democrats; their "moderation," moreover, is mostly a matter of positioning, making a virtue out of lack of intense ideological conviction.

The "moderate" has thus rendered himself almost completely unsuitable for Republican Presidential politics. He

has crafted his appeal too generously; he can't survive among the decidedly conservative G.O.P. primary electorate, where a vibrant constituency can be animated by ideology. In the Senate this species of "moderate" becomes the natural ally of the neo-Taftite. They share a common Republican patrimony that separates them from the Sun Belt conservatives. In the cockpit of the Senate, the party dominates the movement. And Bob Dole presides.

According to the conventional wisdom there are two distinct Doles—the "good" Dole and the "bad" Dole. The "bad" one was a Republican hatchet man who assailed "Democrat wars" and snarled at Nixon's detractors. The "good" Dole sponsored the food stamp program and voted for civil rights bills. While Dole's savage sense of humor may be slightly toned down in recent years—the savagery doesn't usually overwhelm the humor now—he is fundamentally unchanged. He hasn't moved much; the planets have. "I don't know that I've changed that much," he says. "I consider myself a traditional conservative." He is what conservatives were like before Goldwater. And he is a particular variety. His support for food stamps and civil rights isn't a drift away from his roots. They are Republican and progressive positions. (Alf Landon of Kansas, after all, was a Progressive Republican.) Dole is unyielding in substance, but as times change he is viewed from a new angle.

He offers the masterful practice of political brokerage, lightened by black humor. His economics are an unspoken moral code, puritanism on the plains. "I've grown up in the Republican Party," he says. "I've heard time after time, heard it from business people and farmers, about deficits. And we've run it up bigger than all the Administrations in history. Deficits are *bad*. It ought to be a top priority. You can't live on a credit card forever."

Traditional Republican thinking on the federal deficit has its source in the yeoman economy, where farmers and artisans lived in constant terror of debt, which portended foreclosure and ruin. Moreover, debt undermined moral character. What kind of weird doctrine would teach that a penny saved is not a penny earned, but the cause of Depression? How could one get something (prosperity) for nothing (debt), as the Keynesians suggested?

Dole repeatedly says that things aren't "easy." During World War II he suffered wounds that hospitalized him for a year and left him without full use of his right arm. He believes in success achieved by hard work, in reward as compensation for effort. It's not surprising he's offended by Reagan's economics.

WITH REAGAN, we're not in Kansas anymore. The shift from small-town society to mass consumer culture has been accompanied by a shift in political types. In the conservative cosmology, the shift has been from the undramatic Taft to the prickly Goldwater to the smooth Reagan. Reagan knows that good luck can last a lifetime. His wife has even named their new dog Lucky. He stresses pleasure; Dole emphasizes pain. Reagan offers self-indulgence, Dole self-discipline. His new dog is named Leader.

Reagan remains the inveterate New Dealer in not being taken in by the metaphysics of deficit-fear. Although he decries it, deficit spending sustained the recovery guaranteeing his reelection. Keynesianism and Reaganism are similar in that they undermine the old puritan sense of guilt. The difference is that Reagan denies what the liberals used to acknowledge: that there are times when deficits are actually good.

Reagan's innovation allowed the Republicans to overcome the stigma of stagnation attached to them since Hoover. The effort to escape this crippling label led Nixon, who attacked Kennedy's "growthmanship" in 1960, to proclaim himself a Keynesian a decade later. Reagan was led to enact a perverse Keynesian program, which conservatives insist on calling the death of Keynesianism. But Bob Dole is not confused. Supply-siders, he believes, "don't face reality. They've always got another base to cover. Everyone believes we have to reduce spending. I'm not sure they want to make these choices. It's crazy."

From the start, Dole was wary of supply-side economics. But as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, he played the good soldier, supporting his President's tax cut measure. In August 1981, when the bill was signed, the Administration projected a budget surplus for 1984. Recession and deficits followed instead. Dole wanted to raise taxes. In March 1982 he proposed \$105 billion in increases. No dice. Then in August 1982 he helped shepherd a \$98.9 billion increase through the Senate, a bill hailed by liberal tax reformers for its fearless loophole-closing. Dole wanted the pain to be shared by even the undeserving rich. The measure was the largest tax hike in history, a direct repudiation of the Reagan program passed just the year before. Then Dole proposed another increase. But the recovery appeared and pain had limited appeal.

Except for Walter Mondale, who campaigned on a promise to raise taxes. Reagan announced that taxes would be raised "over my dead body." And he pledged not to cut Medicare and Social Security and defense. The public, massaged by his feel-good campaign, was in no mood for sacrifice.

SHORTLY AFTER the election, the Treasury Department released a remarkably equitable tax reform program, which Reagan did not embrace. The proposal, and Stockman's draconian budget-cutting plan, had the effect of inspiring virtually all the lobbyists in Washington to mobilize their resources against each specific change. In 1981 Reagan was able to enact his complete economic program only with a unified business coalition, arrayed behind his unwavering leadership. This time the tax and budget bills appeared destined to be handled separately, almost ensuring that the contentious interests can focus their energy on their immediate and narrow concerns. How can the President generate political momentum amidst legislative chaos? "I see the business people chewing up the tax bill and spitting it out," says Dole. "They're so busy on that they don't have time on budget restraint. In 1981, giving it away was easy. Now, we're taking it

away. It's much more difficult." To Dole, the deficits make budget-cutting and tax reform a necessary but Sisyphean task. "I don't know how we'll do it. It may be a stalemate."

The netherworld that Reagan described as Mondale's Inferno may be the fate of the traditional Republicans as they are engulfed in the political economy of stagnation. The "moderates" have risen just in time to be mouse-trapped by the next economic decline prompted by supply-side theories. While the "moderates" try conscientiously to grapple with the fiscal dilemmas created by the Laffer curve enthusiasm, the supply-siders are already happily hunting the next snark—the gold standard. The "moderates" are about to be impressed into the conservative inopportunist society. Their Republicanism dooms them to respond in the traditional manner: they will continue to seek the ever-elusive balanced budget. Even as the economy mutates into new postindustrial forms, their conception of it remains unchanged.

IN 1986 the Republicans must again confront the consequences of Reagan's economics, with results that historical precedent suggests may differ from this year's experience. Paradoxically, the regulars' continuing control of the Senate depends upon the conservatives' success. Swept into office on Reagan's coattails in 1980, many conservatives are extremely vulnerable. But by losing, they would destroy the regulars' power base. Without the Senate, the traditional Republicans would have to fall back on national political networks if they wish to influence the convention. *Bob Dole for President?* Influence in Washington would not count for much, especially among primary voters who regard "big government" as the fount of the country's troubles. The traditionalists, however, think almost exclusively in institutional terms. Their strength, after all, comes from their links to permanent structures—constitutional and corporate. This Establishment is in place, but not in motion; the regulars have no movement to carry them against the conservatives in 1988. "Where's the base outside of Washington?" inquires Robert Teeter, a Republican pollster with close ties to the White House. "When you get to the convention the Washington strength doesn't hold. Dole doesn't have a natural base. With these guys there's nothing at the end of the string." If the regulars lose the Senate in 1986 and fail to sustain a Presidential candidacy in 1988, they must return to the limbo they occupied for decades.

What frustrates the conservatives now, however, may benefit them later. If the Republicans lose control of the Senate, the conservatives will blame the regulars, even if conservative losses are the proximate cause and conservative policies the underlying cause. Party defeat in the Senate would enhance the conservatives' position in the intra-party competition. Since they have not been invested with governing responsibility within the Congressional caucus, they may reap their reward untainted at the convention. "The arithmetic is against the Senate moderates," says Vin Weber. "And history is against them. Their response is exactly wrong. Rather than making the themes that

worked in 1984 those of 1986 they are ensuring they won't have those positive themes. Look at the Reagan ads. Find the one that says: Vote Republican and make hard nasty decisions. It's a deadly game they're playing. It's heading us toward disaster in 1986. The bad news is that we'll lose the Senate in 1986. The good news is that it won't make any difference."

Six weeks after the President's reelection his leadership is absent or at least incredibly subtle. Some believe there's a guiding intelligence in this vacuum, that chaos is a deliberate strategy, a classic Reagan gambit. But a fierce factionalism has been triggered, a preview of the Republican fragmentation that appears inevitable when Reagan departs. The party and the movement are already at war.

Reporters, Richard Allen wants to help you—or else.

MUSCLING THE MEDIA

BY CHUCK LANE

A COUPLE of months ago, William D. Rogers, a partner in the prestigious Washington law firm of Arnold & Porter, sent a large package to every major newspaper, magazine, and TV network in America. In an accompanying letter, he put the recipients "on notice" that "incorrect, incomplete or misleading references" to his client, Richard V. Allen, will be "actionable at law" (that is, subject to a libel suit). Rogers attached a sheaf of clippings illustrating what Allen does not wish to read about himself. The clippings said, in effect, that Allen had taken a \$1,000 bribe while serving as National Security Adviser to President Reagan in 1981 and that he was forced to resign because of it. The package also contained a copy of a Justice Department report saying that there wasn't enough evidence against Allen to warrant prosecution, and letters of apology Allen had extracted from journalists (including such luminaries as Joseph Kraft and Anthony Lewis) who had written about the charge without mentioning the Justice Department report.

Allen dismisses the idea that he and his lawyer are trying to bully the press. "That's just pusillanimous bleating baloney," he said in a recent interview on "Panorama," a local TV show in Washington. He says the letter—which was sent to news outfits regardless of whether they had any plans to write about him—is an attempt to "assist" the media. By reminding reporters of the Justice Department report, he says, it will promote accuracy and prevent libel suits, which are "as distasteful to journalists as they are for victims."

This is thoughtful of Allen, considering that it costs about \$200 per hour to hire the services of a top Arnold & Porter attorney. But Allen isn't generally known for his charitable impulses toward the press. Earlier this year, in a *USA Today* column titled CONTROL THE MEDIA TO END THEIR ABUSES, Allen likened journalism to street crime. "In simulated gang rape, pack journalists descend on the

homes of their victims. My family and I were virtually held hostage for six weeks during a non-stop stakeout," Allen wrote. "People put themselves at an enormous risk when the media put them in the cross hairs and squeeze the trigger." He urged citizens to fight back by pressing for higher libel judgments.

I learned firsthand about Allen's desire to assist reporters when I called his office to set up an interview. An aide told me to submit my questions in writing. (The explanation was that Allen was too busy to meet me, although it must have taken him longer to write out answers than to answer questions face to face.) After a few days, Allen sent a package to my boss, Martin Peretz, containing his answers and a letter. He said my questions amounted to "sadistic harassment," and hinted broadly that he would sue THE NEW REPUBLIC if he didn't like what I wrote about him. "I'm not trying to pick a fight with THE NEW REPUBLIC, Mr. Peretz," he added, "and I advise THE NEW REPUBLIC not to pick one with me." Later, I managed to get Allen on the telephone, but he again refused to entertain questions unless I put them in writing.

Allen's attempts to get reporters to see things his way are partly due to the fact that he has been burned in the past. Reporters and camera crews camping out at his house to cover the story of his alleged bribe-taking behaved disgracefully. (One reporter accosted Allen's 6-year-old daughter for an interview on the way to school.) And some reporters have given inaccurate shorthand accounts of the events leading up to his resignation. Last March, for example, an ABC News reporter, Jack Smith, said that Allen "set up an interview with Nancy Reagan for a Japanese magazine, but resigned when it turned out he'd accepted \$1,000 for his trouble."

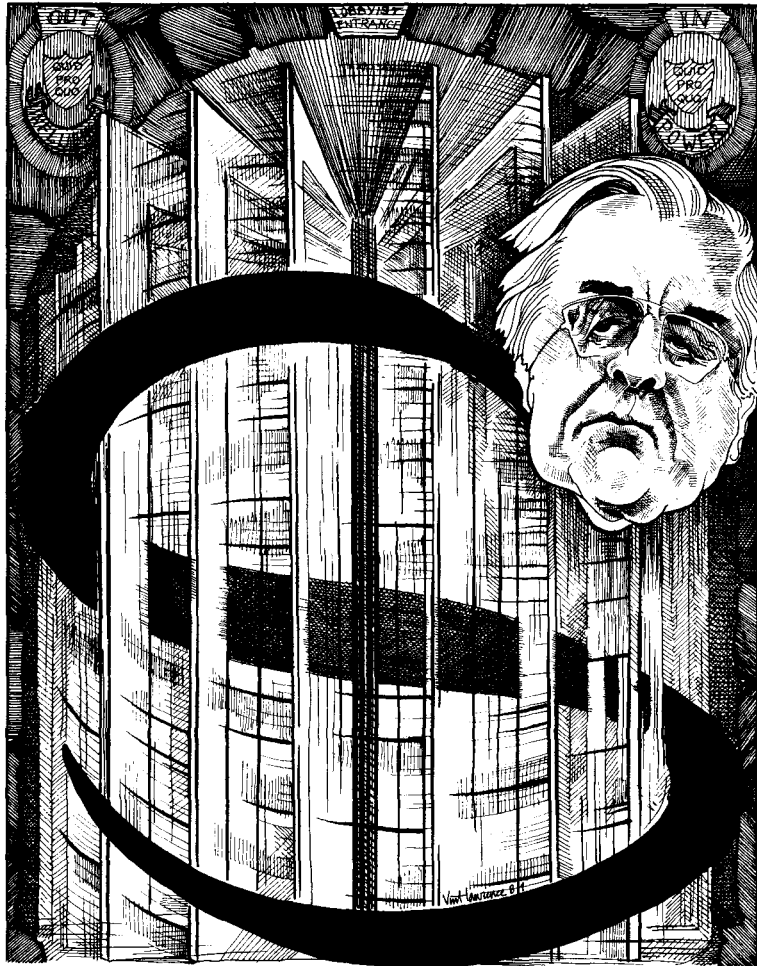
The actual story of Allen's departure from office is a bit more complicated. Late in 1981, it was reported that Allen had accepted three expensive watches from a Japanese

academic and government consultant named Tamotsu Takase and his wife, and \$1,000 from some Japanese journalists, in exchange for arranging an interview with Nancy Reagan. Deputy White House Counsel Richard Hauser and Attorney General William French Smith looked into the matter. They ultimately accepted Allen's explanation: the Takases were old friends, and the watches were a personal gift. Allen tried to arrange an interview, but informed the Takases that it wasn't possible. Another White House aide set up the interview, which Allen attended. After the session, the journalists tried to hand a \$1,000 honorarium to Mrs. Reagan, but Allen "intercepted" it, and told his secretary to send it to the Treasury. The secretary mistakenly left the money in Allen's office safe, where it was discovered six months later. Shortly after being cleared, on January 4, 1982, Allen resigned. He says he was forced out in a battle over policy with White House moderates—which is true, though it's hard to believe the moderates could have won so swiftly absent the \$1,000 affair.

But Allen's threatening letter could reflect more than just understandable frustration. For the last dozen years or so, he has alternated between working for the government and lobbying for corporations. Indeed, after his resignation as National Security Adviser, Allen set up shop as a lobbyist again. This method of earning a living, known as "the revolving door," works like this: inside the corridors of power, an official makes connections; on the outside, he makes this influence available (for a fee) to clients who want something from the government. Although some consider such brazen influence-peddling unethical, it's perfectly legal. And Allen is but one of dozens who have indulged. In a recent interview with Paul Engelmayer of *The Wall Street Journal*, former Interior Secretary James Watt described his own current business this way: "If a company needs a decision that's been languishing on somebody's desk, because of my reputation and contacts, we can get through the right doors."

As Watt's remarks suggest, "reputation" is a key business asset for an influence peddler. Both his clients and the officials he seeks to influence must be convinced of his personal importance and ability to command access to public officials. Allen disagrees with this. " 'Access' is overrated and often irrelevant. Logic, rather than the identity of the person involved, informs the decision making process," he informed me. "Since arriving in Washington in 1957, I have found our Government . . . remarkably open and accessible, and over the years increasingly so." But when I asked William D. Rogers if Allen has any reason

to be more concerned about his reputation than ordinary citizens, he replied that "as a practical matter, there are some kinds of careers that turn on matters of reputation. An adviser about affairs in Washington needs his reputation especially. There's no one, except perhaps a minister, for whom it's more vital." If Rogers is right, even legitimate critical reporting—quite apart from the "sleazy, underhanded, bottom-feeding attacks" Allen complained of in a recent interview with *Washington Journalism Review*—might diminish the value of this business asset. The point is that Allen's free-floating libel threat is bound to make reporters wary of talking about him except in the most uncontroversial terms, and, whether he



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

intends it or not, this could benefit him substantially.

It's quite possible to criticize Allen's conduct in the \$1,000 affair without suggesting that he did anything illegal. The Justice Department report says that "it is . . . doubtful that Mr. Allen performed any 'official' act to benefit the Japanese journalists. Although he did provide some assistance prior to the inauguration in forwarding a request for an interview with Mrs. Reagan, such assistance falls outside Mr. Allen's official duties." In other words, the "unofficial" world of using connections to help people you do business with, such as Takase (who was not only a friend of Allen's, but a former business associate as well) was outside the Justice Department's purview. This doesn't mean it's outside the legitimate interest of journal-

ists or citizens in general. In a career like Allen's, it inevitably becomes difficult to keep the "unofficial" and "official" worlds distinct. At the same time he was trying to explain the watches, Allen found himself explaining why he had sat in on a 1981 White House meeting about auto import quotas, even though only a year earlier he had been paid by a Japanese automaker to lobby against such quotas. (Allen said he was just "a notetaker" at the meeting, and was cleared of wrongdoing by Hauser.)

BUT THESE ARE relatively petty matters. A bigger problem for Allen is that there are so many other murky chapters in his past, and that this history is all right there on the public record. Allen's activities during and shortly after the Nixon years were first detailed in a 1980 piece by Jeff Klein and Brian McTigue of *Mother Jones* magazine. Reporter Jonathan Kwitny later confirmed this article (and supplemented it with comment from Allen, which *Mother Jones* had been unable to obtain) in articles for *The Wall Street Journal* and *THE NEW REPUBLIC* ("The Rehabilitation Of Richard Allen," December 6, 1980). These articles showed how Allen, trading freely on his connections, repeatedly became involved in questionable situations. They caused quite a stir during the 1980 Presidential campaign, when Allen was working as Ronald Reagan's top foreign policy adviser.

Allen began his government career in 1969 as a deputy to then-National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger. He and the more cerebral Kissinger didn't get along. (Kissinger looked down on Allen, who reportedly was called "Dr. Allen" around the N.S.C., although his Ph.D. thesis had been rejected at the University of Munich.) Allen left the White House in 1970. But Nixon gave him a post on an advisory panel called the President's Commission on International Trade and Investment Policy. This occasioned one of Allen's first efforts to get into the lobbying business. According to correspondence made public by Kwitny in the *Journal* and in *THE NEW REPUBLIC*, Allen gave confidential information about the Commission's deliberations to Tamotsu Takase (the same Tamotsu Takase who later gave him the watches). Allen explicitly told Takase that he was passing along secrets. He also boasted about the power of his position, telling Takase that "the recommendations which our Commission makes will be translated into the actual legislative recommendations which the Administration will submit to Congress." Allen conceded to Kwitny that his leaks were part of "a straightforward proposal of an idea," in which he suggested to Takase that Japan act on the information by setting up a big anti-protectionism lobby on Capitol Hill. He even nominated a friend, David Fleming, to head up the proposed effort.

The lobbying idea never materialized. But Fleming did end up getting a consulting job with Nissan at \$120,000 per year. In July 1971 Allen returned to the White House as Nixon's Special Assistant for International Economic Affairs, but left again a year later. In a February 1973 letter, made public by Kwitny, Allen demanded that Fleming

give him half the money, on the ground that he had introduced Fleming to Japan in the first place. Fleming never paid. His lawyer informed him that it would be illegal for him to make such a payment because he signed his contract with Nissan while Allen was still in his second job at the White House. Allen dropped the matter after that. Not long thereafter Nissan let go of Fleming and hired Allen.

In 1972, in his new role at the White House, Allen had to work with the Grumman Corporation, which was seeking White House help in its efforts to sell reconnaissance planes to Japan. Former Grumman executive Thomas Cheatham testified under oath at a 1976 Senate committee hearing that Allen demanded a \$1 million contribution to Nixon's reelection campaign in exchange for White House help. (Allen denied this in sworn testimony to the same committee. He repeated his denial to Kwitny. The conflict between his story and Cheatham's was referred to the Justice Department, which investigated, but took no action.)

Only a year later, Allen was back in the private sector as the head of a firm called Potomac International Corporation. One client was a Portuguese business consortium which paid him \$60,000 per year to sell Congress on the idea of Portuguese colonial rule in Mozambique and Angola. Another was Robert Vesco's lawyer, Howard Cerny. On August 1, 1972 (one day after Allen left the Nixon White House for the second and last time), Cerny hired Allen for \$10,000 per month to look into setting up an unregulated banking center in Portugal's Azores Islands. That never worked out, but Allen did succeed in arranging a meeting for Cerny with an old friend of Allen's, William Casey, who was then chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. At the meeting, Cerny tried to get Casey to call off an S.E.C. investigation of Vesco's involvement in a multimillion-dollar stock swindle. (Vesco was later indicted, and is now a fugitive.) In an interview with Kwitny, Allen defended his actions. He said he had known nothing of the S.E.C. investigation, and that he thought Vesco was just "an international businessman from New Jersey." He added that he never knew Cerny intended to talk to Casey about Vesco, that he later apologized to Casey, and that he "walked out of the meeting for five to seven minutes" while Cerny talked about Vesco. Disgusted as he was by Cerny's apparent deceit, however, Allen moved Potomac International into a spare office at Cerny's law firm.

When these matters surfaced, Allen was obliged to leave the Reagan campaign. Shortly after the election, however, Ed Meese, then the chief of Reagan's transition team, conducted his own investigation. Meese pronounced Allen fit to serve in the Administration.

THAT WAS that for the 1980 Allen affair. Now the 1982 Allen affair has receded as well. Allen is once again a major figure in the Washington conservative community. He holds the title of Distinguished Fellow and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the East Asian Studies

Center at the Heritage Foundation. (In 1980, when the *Zeitgeist* was more moderate, Allen told Robert Toth, a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*, that he "never belonged to a conservative group" such as Heritage, and therefore was not a right-wing ideologue.) Allen also serves as senior counselor to the Republican National Committee. For this he gets \$3,500 per month, plus expenses. (According to Federal Elections Commission documents, the R.N.C. reimbursed him \$5,000 for "transportation and meals" during August.) Allen's main task is to represent the party in international organizations of conservative parties. This involves jetting to such locales as Paris, Honolulu, Canberra, and Madrid. It also involved mixing with foreign guests at parties and receptions during the Republican Convention in Dallas. (According to one Dallas source, Allen took this a bit too far. At a ranch party hosted by former Congressman Jim Collins, Allen appeared on the receiving line, and began thanking guests for attending his party. Allen says that his official duties required him to welcome foreign guests.)

But these are mere sidelights. Allen's main pursuit is the Richard V. Allen Company, which he says provides "analysis, evaluation, advice, and guidance on a range of public policy issues, and business opportunities in this country and abroad." Setting up meetings with government officials, says Allen, is "incidental" to the firm's activities. According to documents he filed with the Justice Department, however, Allen has been registered for the last two years as a foreign agent of the Panama Canal Study Group, a consortium of Japanese banks and industrial firms which is thinking about digging a new canal across Panama. The documents show that Allen has devoted the bulk of his efforts to meeting with middle-ranking State Department officials who are involved in a U.S.-Panamanian-Japanese feasibility study of a new canal. He has also introduced the Group to Secretary of State George Shultz, Senator Paul Laxalt, and Secretary of the Treasury Donald Regan, among many other high-ranking officials. In return for these services, the Group pays Allen \$300,000 per year, plus expenses. One expense was a \$662 flight from Panama to the U.S. on an Air Force jet.

Another recent client was Alitalia, Italy's national airline. According to the Justice Department documents, Allen signed on with the airline in April 1983, and worked one year for a fee of \$125,000. The company was in the market for McDonnell Douglas DC-9s; Allen's job was to help them find low-cost credit to make the purchases. He contacted William Brock, the U.S. Trade Representative; William Draper, the chairman of the Export-Import Bank; and five high-ranking Ex-Im loan officers, telling them that the plane sales would create jobs for Americans. Not long thereafter, the bank awarded Alitalia a \$75 million loan and a \$150 million loan guarantee. Allen modestly refuses to claim credit for Alitalia's obtaining the loan, but says that "it is certainly flattering to have it suggested."

And unlike some lobbyists who only have influence in this country, Allen's experience in international affairs enables him to operate abroad, too. R. J. Reynolds Interna-

tional is trying to gain the right to sell cigarettes in South Korea, which now bars foreign cigarettes, and has hired Allen to work on the Korean government. Just as he went out of his way to impress Tamotsu Takase back in 1970, now Allen is flaunting his power and importance to those he seeks to influence on a client's behalf. A memo Allen's firm sent to the Korean government on March 14, 1984, prominently mentions Allen's former affiliation with the White House, and hints that a Korean refusal to admit R.J.R. cigarettes could "be dangerous to the relationship" between South Korea and the United States. The memo even seems to suggest a *quid pro quo*: "Our firm will work to secure renewal of [U.S. trade] legislation without prejudice to Korean exports. To achieve this, however, Korea will have to remove some tight restrictions over competitive U.S. imports." Allen wouldn't say specifically what his firm did to influence the content of the bill.

BUT WHY should anyone care if Richard Allen trades on his connections? And how much effect can his bullying of the press actually have? After all, there is some debate about the power of his preemptive libel threat. Katharine Darrow, *The New York Times's* general counsel, says, "We get letters like this all the time—although not of this length—and frankly I don't think they have much effect." On the other hand, Gregg Easterbrook, a staff writer for *The Atlantic*, says that because of Allen's threat he expunged a brief reference to the \$1,000 affair in an article he wrote recently. (Easterbrook says he was afraid of paying for a libel suit, not of losing one.)

One reason to worry about Allen's attempt to manage the media is that past efforts to outlaw abuses of the "revolving door" have failed. In 1978 Congress passed an Ethics in Government Act which barred former officials for two years from acting "with intent to influence" the government on matters that had been their "official responsibility," and barred senior officials from all contact with their former agencies for one year. But the law was hard to enforce, and just two years after its passage Congress amended away what little teeth it had.

This leaves individual conscience and exposure in the press as the only remaining checks on the excesses of influence-peddlers. In his letter to Martin Peretz, Allen insisted that no "private business" of his could also be of interest to the press. This is nonsense. Lobbying and the policy decisions that it influences are patently public business. The revolving door is as much a part of the Washington scene as committee hearings and state dinners. To be sure, reporters don't always perform their watchdog role to perfection. But Allen's career suggests both the potential for abuses of the revolving door and the importance of letting the public know about them. If a menacing letter from Allen has a chilling effect on the way the press covers him, what's to prevent every other official-turned-lobbyist from threatening to sue anyone who gets too nosy about their "private business"? This browbeating sets a bad precedent. □

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

The Reel Thing

Once again, the *Once Upon a Time in America* syndrome. That film, ostensibly about gangsters of the 1930s, was really about gangster pictures of that period. *The Cotton Club*, ostensibly about the same gangsters, is also really about the same pictures, plus a heavy admixture of the nightclub sequences that often figured in those pictures. Its only modernity is that it tells the story of some

The Cotton Club
(Orion)

blacks in a way that no picture of its historical period would have done; otherwise *The Cotton Club* is just one more homage to Hollywood.

The director, Francis Coppola, knows well the films he is mocking/adoring, and he makes lots of sly references to them. The parties, the bombings, the machine-gunnings, the gals gals gals are cozily familiar. (How warmly nostalgic it feels to see bootleggers kill one another.) With his editors, Barry Malkin and Robert Q. Lovett, Coppola has studded his film with montages in high Slavko Vorkapich style: careers are advanced in collages; events are condensed by spinning newspapers that eventually fix their headlines before us; years themselves—1931, 1932, etc.—parade past. With his cinematographer, Stephen Goldblatt, Coppola has worked in portentous shadows and canted camera angles to reflect the German expressionist influence that Hollywood was gobbling up fifty years ago. In both these departments, however, Coppola has added his own touches. The editing within sequences is often so restless that it's dizzying. He intercuts dance numbers on the nightclub floor with dramatic action elsewhere (irony!), and he concludes by blending "reality" with "life" by putting dance into the final love scene at Grand Central Station. With the color that his forerunners didn't have at their disposal, Coppola frequently splashes in golden browns,

and stays well away from realistic color all the time to make every moment look like history. He uses a lot of tight shots and close-ups possibly to suggest the psychological insights that were missing from the pictures of the 1930s.

The screenplay is by Coppola and by William Kennedy, the bard of Albany; they wrote the original story with the aid of Mario Puzo. I was convinced that they had all had a good time, as they remembered or re-saw old gangster flicks, as they remembered the allegations about George Raft's past and put touches of them in this hero's life; as they remembered Jean Harlow, the screen persona, and Texas Guinan, the nightclub owner, and added a few drops of each to the heroine; as they remembered the story of Al Capone getting slightly cross with a colleague, breaking a bottle, and grinding the broken end into his colleague's face. And they remembered, too, that among the many celebrated black entertainers who passed through the Cotton Club were teams like the Nicholas Brothers, and they apparently used that fact as a springboard for a conventional backstage fiction, this time about blacks.

The Cotton Club was a hot subject of discussion among us white New York high school and college kids who of course never got anywhere near it. (I had a college friend who said he had been there once, but nobody believed him.) It was the most famous of the Harlem nightspots to which only white people were admitted though all the entertainers were black. The film shows the Cotton Club as nationally renowned—Chaplin and Cagney and Swanson attend—and as a rendezvous for gangsters, chiefly Owney Madden, Dutch Schultz, and (later) Lucky Luciano. In and around the club, four main story strands weave: gangland rivalries; the sporadic love affair between a white jazz cornetist (Richard Gere) who works elsewhere of course and a tootsie (Diane Lane) who is Schultz's

property; the aberrations of the cornetist's criminal brother (Nicolas Cage); and the stormy love affair of a black tap dancer (Gregory Hines) and a black singer (Lonette McKee). With the Cotton Club as the hub of the wheel, these stories are meant to circumscribe the dazzle and frenzy of the late 1920s, the thud of the Depression, the advent of a glimmer of social justice. (At the end of the film, black patrons are admitted to the Club.) These are elements of a possibly good film, but it wasn't made. Instead, Coppola and friends made a film about a film on those elements.

This focus-once-removed begins with the treatment of the characters. They are so candidly two-dimensional that we are clearly meant to recognize them as familiar movie figures and to accept them as such. Further, not one of them is given much more than a wisp of moral sense. This might be admirable if *The Cotton Club* were a deliberate exploration of immorality, like Elaine May's *Mikey and Nicky*, but here we're supposed to overlook the characters' moral blankness just because they are characters in a movie. These people are meant to entrance us additionally because they

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Beverly Hills Cop. Eddie Murphy, funny and provocative, gives contemporary bite to the old story about a maverick detective revenging a friend's murder. (Reviewed 12/31/84)

The Case Is Closed. The twenty-second film by the Bengali, Mrinal Sen, yet his first to be theatrically released here. A muted, strong tale of the effect on a Calcutta family of a servant's accidental death. (12/24/84)

Falling in Love. For those who have fallen in love with Meryl Streep, or are susceptible. Robert De Niro, too, for that matter. One more go-round about somebody's husband and somebody else's wife, but romantically done. (12/10/84)

Stranger than Paradise. Tart, witty, insidious. Three young people, two of them Hungarian immigrants, float on an underground stream of American life. (10/29/84)

SK

are porters of reminders from bygone films, carrying with them the baggage of our filmgoing lives.

As the cornetist placed in Hollywood by gangland, Gere doesn't do his best—his best was in *Breathless*—but he has some flash. (And he is credited with his own cornet solos.) As the kept woman (remember that phrase?) who keeps on being kept till she gets her own nightclub, Lane is precocious: she is herself quite young but is credibly brassy and, in time, worn. James Remar, as Schultz, wears a fixed snarl throughout like a mask. (Schultz's death scene is one of the factual liberties taken here. He didn't die in the restaurant where he was gunned down. He lingered in a hospital bed for twenty-four hours during which he was questioned by police and his raving answers were taken down by a police stenographer. The transcript was published and became the basis of William Burroughs's *The Last Words of Dutch Schultz*.) The previous time I saw Bob Hoskins was as a cockney gangster in a British picture; as Owney Madden, he sounds right and is a small barrel of vim. Hines was in the Broadway musical *Sophisticated Ladies*, done to the music of Duke Ellington, who himself makes an "appearance" here; that show was directed by Michael Smuin, the principal choreographer of this film. Hines is more engag-

ing here than he was in that show, perhaps because, according to the credits, he did the "tap improvography." Those who remember Julian Beck as co-director of the Living Theater may care to know that he plays a wraithlike gunsel here, effectively. (His co-director, Judith Malina, was effective in *Dog Day Afternoon*. Both of these good film performances increase one's respect for Beck and Malina, in a wry way.)

I rated *The Godfather*, both parts, much lower than did numerous others, but certainly Coppola tried in those films to create a genuine film epic, monumentally serious, about organized crime in America. In *The Cotton Club* he has made a picture with much of the manner and matter of the very gangster films he once tried to supersede. The *Cotton Club* itself was an excellent locus for a film, a ready-made metaphor. But for whatever reasons (the press reported production tussles), the promising fruitful idea became a hothouse forced plant. Coppola, seemingly tormented by an inability to fulfill his own ideas and talents, took refuge in unsubtle stylistics. The great American curse in the arts is that many people keep showing talent without producing fully realized works. Coppola, up to now anyway, is in that line.

zance with Linda Ronstadt. Further evidence is the increasing incidence of musicals such as *Candide* and *Sweeney Todd* in the repertory of the New York City Opera Company and elsewhere; that would arguably look like the kind of token respect grand opera occasionally pays to the more ambitious projects of sister arts, were it not that, funded by a generous grant for the purpose, Beverly Sills recently announced a spring season devoted *entirely* to American musical comedies. It is highly symbolic that the institution formerly known as the National Institute of Opera has now changed its name to the National Institute of Musical Theater.

TWO converging problems underlie this growing union: the recent fossilization of opera, which needs an infusion of new energy to relieve its arthritic traditionalism, and Broadway's growing incapacity to mount new musicals or even musical revivals without some prior guarantee of success. The liaison between opera and musicals, therefore, represents a pooling of resources, similar to that between Broadway and the resident theater in regard to serious plays. It is bound to create institutional anxieties of a similar aesthetic and economic kind.

The Broadway musical has always suffered from having been crowned an "American art form" before fully establishing its claim to art. This posed no identity crisis for such early titans as Cole Porter or Irving Berlin or Rodgers or Hart because no one had yet invested musical comedy writers with ambitions beyond creating good healthy tuneful entertainment. (George Gershwin had the native ability to write equally well for the opera and the musical stage.) But beginning with the mostly regional book and play adaptations of Rodgers and Hammerstein and continuing through the sophisticated urban forms of Leonard Bernstein and, particularly, Stephen Sondheim, there has been a noticeable effort to prove the musical worthy of the new seriousness for which it was being hailed.

In Mr. Sondheim's case, this has created the sense that he is writing avant-garde musicals, an illusion sustained by his reductive compounds of serious art forms and Broadway conventions: operatic *singspiel* in *Sweeney Todd*, the process of painting in *Sunday in the Park With George*, and Japanese theater (which is to say, Japanese opera)—Kabuki, Bun-

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Blurring the Edges

There has recently been a concerted effort to break down the boundary lines separating opera and theater, a development which sometimes advances both forms, at other times threatens to blur the already smudged edges between commercial and serious art. In the past, the Met might temporarily

Pacific Overtures
by Stephen Sondheim

La Bohème
by Giacomo Puccini

loan out Ezio Pinza to *South Pacific* to wash "Some Enchanted Evening" with operatic phrasing, while Broad-

way would reciprocate by sending Danny Kaye to brighten up the Met's *Fledermaus*—but these were aberrations. Now professionals of all types are passing freely between the stage and the opera house, with occasional visits from Tin Pan Alley as well. The most telling example of this interchange is the way stage directors—Andrei Serban, Jonathan Miller, Peter Hall, Peter Sellars—have been startling opera audiences with new interpretations of familiar masterpieces. A reverse example is Peter Brook's recent expropriation of *Carmen* for the theater, not to mention the New York Shakespeare Theater's Broadway production of *Pirates of Pen-*

raku, and Noh drama—in *Pacific Overtures*. This last effort, which failed on Broadway in 1976, can now be seen again in revival at the off-Broadway Promenade Theater in a stripped-down version which manages to heighten both its defects and its virtues. Mr. Sondheim and his writers, John Weidman and Hugh Wheeler, lit on a potentially fine subject—the visit of Commodore Matthew Perry to Japan in 1853 and the consequent effects of foreign influences on Japanese culture. They also conceived the notion of having us witness these events through the eyes of innocent Japanese hitherto ignorant of Westerners or Western customs, with the original director, Hal Prince, adding the splendid concept of making those innocents perceive Perry's ship as a dragon with burning eyes and Perry himself as a pasty-faced barechested demon with a blond lion mane extending virtually to his feet.

THE whole project, in short, was surrounded by intelligence, but, as often happens in these cases, it was ultimately unable to escape its Broadway roots. What results is a curious melange of Oriental ceremony and American show biz, which is rather ironic considering that the theme of the show is the corruption of Eastern innocence by Western sophistication. (By mixing traditional Japanese conventions with a hint of Broadway kitsch, Sondheim and company are unwittingly demonstrating the truth of this observation.) In the current production (modestly directed by Fran Soeder with respectful nods to Hal Prince), the Reciter—a shaven-headed narrator in a kimono—seems to have wandered in from *The King and I*. There are Oriental actors on stage, but also an inordinate number of chorus gypsies. Men play the women's parts, as in all traditional Japanese drama, but these performers, instead of inhabiting the female characters, seem to be doing drag numbers from *La Cage Aux Folles*. Haikus are announced; what we get instead are mundane proverbialisms. Five geisha girls arrive to do a turn that would not be out of place in *Teahouse of the August Moon*. As for the music, it is so full of repeated figures and the composer's customary tuneless insistence that the songs grow off rather than on you, while the various numbers sung by the stereotyped French, Dutch, Russian, and American visitors make the score almost seem an act of Western

self-hatred. By the time of the finale—it takes place in modern industrialized Tokyo, where the theme is “do it nicer, do it faster” and contemporary Japanese are threatening to “do to the rest of Asia what America has done to us”—one begins to suspect that among the things “done” by the United States to Japanese culture are not only neon and digital watches, computers and Vegas strips, but also such musicals as *Pacific Overtures*.

Puccini's *La Bohème* at the New York Public Theater is another effort to expropriate opera for the theater, and I went to it with my prejudices poised to leap. There had been much pre-opening publicity about the casting of Linda Ronstadt, a rock singer, as Mimi, and Gary Morris, a country singer, as Rodolfo, along with stories reporting that Miss Ronstadt's unsupported voice was inadequate to the taxing demands of the role. The management had invited me to see the alternate cast, but I could work up no excitement about an enterprise where all the signs suggested a beautiful work being mindlessly popularized. Within five minutes, I found myself surrendering to one of the most potent experiences of my theatergoing experience.

I'M STILL trying to understand why this production gripped me so. Judged by technical standards, David Carroll's Rodolfo was hardly a match for Björling or Pavarotti, and Patti Cohenour's Mimi could not be compared in power with that of de los Angeles or Freni; the voices, though pleasant and melodious, were light, and one could occasionally detect miking. Bob Shaw's rather tacky revolving settings were inhibited by the limited space of the Anspacher; and the orchestra, playing Michael Starobin's orchestrations, was not only seriously reduced, but substituted electric keyboards for the string sections. At first sight, the show reminded me of those pocket productions of Shakespeare one used to see in the Village thirty years ago, where *Hamlet* was performed with a cast of eight, and the producer passed around a hat at the conclusion of the play. Yet I must confess to having abdicated all critical scruples and reservations by the time of Mimi's first entrance, entering the story in a way I find rare in opera, and giving myself up to what can only be described as powerful emotions of grief.

The director, Wilfrid Leach, and his

cast have managed to find an accessible avenue into the heart of this work by providing it with more credibility, enhancing its narrative values without diminishing its depth. A problem with such familiar operas as *Bohème* is that one begins to feel awe at voices instead of interest in characters, braving the virtuosity of the performers rather than experiencing the drama. This cast renders the music with enough competence to satisfy all but the most discriminating ears, but they are, almost all of them, superb actors as well; they use the intimacy of the Anspacher and its close audience relationships to penetrate deeply into the recesses of the text. By now, for all its magnificent music, *Bohème* has come to seem a soggy verismo chestnut, with arch Bohemian local color and unconvincing lovers' quarrels, ending up in the death obligatory to so many Italian operas as the consumptive heroine mixes her coughs with high C's. In the Leach production, the characters are utterly convincing as genuine people engaged with real occupations and insoluble dilemmas.

MUCH of the credit for this must go to David Spencer's splendid, critically abused new adaptation and lyrics. Its modern colloquialisms may offend some purists (*Marcello*: “My nuts are freezing”; *Rodolfo*: “Be grateful you still have them. . . . Mine fell off—I'm too numb to feel them”), but it creates a contemporary relaxation and informality that I found totally winning. Spencer does more than adapt or modernize; he actually invents more credible motivations for the characters. For example, I've never been convinced by the reasons Rodolfo gives for leaving Mimi in the third act. First, he tells Marcello she's a faithless coquette, which is obviously untrue; then he confesses that he feels responsible for her mortal illness since he can't afford to heat his room. This provides him with a rather stiff nobility that Spencer humanizes: in this version Rodolfo leaves Mimi because he cannot bear to see her die. One more example: at the end of Puccini's story, everyone realizes that Mimi is dead except the person closest to her, Rodolfo, thus permitting his curtain-closing cry over her corpse. In Spencer's version, he *knows* she is dead, but cannot bring himself to admit it (“What are you looking at? She's just sleeping”).

The youthful handsome cast is charming. Patti Cohenour is a delicate

waiflike Mimi, and David Carroll's Rodolfo a self-flagellating poet ("Jesus, who wrote this?"); Howard McGillin as Marcello, perhaps the strongest performance of the show, provides a direct American friendliness that makes his relationship with Rodolfo a true comradeship; Cass Morgan's toothsome Musette, somewhat less than thrilling in her waltz, has moments of genuine compassion in her scenes with Mimi; and Keith David as the philosopher Colline and Neal

Klein as the musician Schaunard round out the full complement of Bohemian friends.

I realize I am in a distinct minority in my evaluation of this production. I can only report an inescapable personal response. For me, this is one case where the confusion of forms has made something potentially popular without crudely popularizing it, where the blurring of edges has allowed a great piece of music to emerge as a profoundly moving work of theatrical art.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

The Second Industrial Divide:
Possibilities for Prosperity

by Michael J. Piore and Charles F. Sabel

(Basic, 355 pp., \$21.95)

The modern economics profession is surprisingly aloof from the institutions of economic life. As their methods have become more abstract, economists have disdained study of the gritty details of production, the organization of markets, the march of technology. Rather, it is simply assumed that Henry Ford's assembly line of the 1920s, for example, or the rise of computerized production in the 1980s, are natural processes that reflect the changing tastes of the sovereign consumer and the survival of the fittest entrepreneur. Indeed, a graduate student can be certified in neoclassical economics without ever learning much about an actual industry, firm, or technology. This immense intellectual terrain has been left, by default, largely to economic historians, management consultants, engineers, business school professors, and Marxists.

This is the fallow field Michael Piore and Charles Sabel have plowed, and brilliantly. *The Second Industrial Divide* is a collaboration by two genuinely original thinkers from M.I.T., an economist and a political scientist, each difficult to pigeonhole, methodologically or ideologically. There are insights in the book that would appeal to Schumpeter, to Marx, even to Adam Smith.

Piore and Sabel contend that the industrial economy, after a hundred years of mass production and mass markets, is reverting to a more varied and poten-

tially liberating system of specialty production. This they term "flexible specialization." Mass consumer markets, as we have all noticed, are fragmenting into a profusion of specialty markets. There are about twenty variations on the Sony Walkman alone. Have we got a product for you! When I was a 10-year-old, in 1953, I had memorized all eighteen domestic automobile brands. My 10-year-old son, who is a car buff, couldn't possibly name the hundreds of makes and models today.

Moreover, Piore and Sabel write, this specialization in the consumer marketplace reflects a parallel, though less visible, change in the factory: where producers once used very expensive and long-lived single-purpose capital equipment to produce standard goods, the factories of the 1980s are increasingly using tools that can be reprogrammed for an almost infinite variety of purposes. The use of the computer in the home, office, and factory—as an all-purpose tool that can be customized—is of course both the emblem and the substance of this epic shift.

This "second industrial divide," say Piore and Sabel, has multiple implications. First, it means that the dehumanizing, rote factory-based economy may soon be a thing of the past. Mass, standard production requires workers to function as adjuncts of machines; the "flexible specialization" economy uses

HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY

by E. Waterhouse Allen

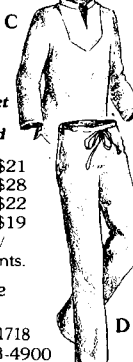
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workers more as artisans. The computer, they write charmingly, is "a machine that meets Marx's definition of an artisan's tool: it is an instrument that responds to and extends the productive capacities of the user." They identify applications of specialized flexibility in such diverse industries as chemicals, electronics, steel, and textiles. In Italy, for example, textile manufacturing has been rebuilt around small shops, high-tech looms, adaptable customized production techniques, and a cooperative network of subcontractors and brokers.

In addition, the shift to flexible specialization has very significant macroeconomic implications, according to Piore and Sabel. "The present deterioration in economic performance," they contend in the more novel half of their thesis, results from inherent limits in the system of mass production. "The use of special-purpose machines and semi-skilled workers to produce standardized goods" introduced rigidities into the larger economy: once corporations had invested massively in expensive assembly lines dedicated to economies of scale in one product (e.g., 1953 Chevrolets), periodic downturns became much harder to bear. You could lay off workers, but not expensive capital equipment.

Therefore, they argue, the Keynesian imperative—to stabilize mass purchasing power—was a direct outgrowth of the mass market system. Conversely, the emerging shift back to a more flexible and fragmented system of markets and production also heralds greater macroeconomic flexibility. Thus, the new industrial economy just might be not only a more humane one, but a more adaptive and ultimately sustainable one as well.

THE book is part description and part prescription. Sabel and Piore are convinced that this second industrial divide is already happening, and they are rooting for it to happen in a humane way. But theirs is not a book of industrial policy blueprints. Nor are they technological determinists, either of the left or the right. Indeed, unlike the pessimistic neo-Marxism of David Noble, who argues that capitalist control will make the new tools just as dehumanizing as the old, or the calculated optimism of Ben Wattenberg or George Gilder, who insist that new technology-cum-entrepreneurship will solve the larger macro problems, Piore and Sabel

are refreshingly anti-determinist.

The fallacy of much current celebration of the new technology, they suggest, is the assumption that technological breakthrough is tantamount to economic growth. But for growth to occur, the new technology—the stuff of microeconomics—must mesh with the larger macroeconomic system: somebody has to buy the products. To have spendable income, people must have jobs.

Much of the current economic malaise, according to Piore and Sable, results from the emerging system of production falling out of harmony with the macroeconomic order. The postwar boom, they argue, was built on a variety of Keynesian or quasi-Keynesian measures that served to bring the micro and macro realms into a rough equilibrium. In the United States the instrument was not primarily government spending (explicitly Keynesian spending strategies were not used until the Kennedy Administration), but the pattern of labor contracts in the large basic industries, which for a time increased wages in lock step with increasing productivity, thus ensuring that "purchasing power would expand at the same rate as national productive capacity."

IN THE 1970s, however, the mass production economy broke down, and so did macroeconomic balance. Much of this had to do with external shock—such as OPEC and wild fluctuation in commodity prices. These were exacerbated, however, by a breakdown in the stability of the system itself. Floating exchange rates undermined the stability and predictability that mass producers need. Globalization of production undermined the labor market mechanisms that balanced purchasing power and supply. Job markets divided into high-paid unionized worker and low-paid nonunion workers.

The heralded collapse of Keynesian "fine-tuning," Piore and Sabel suggest, is really a widening disharmony between the micro and the macro realms. The corporate responses—more multinationals, more conglomerates, more pressures to lower wages—failed to solve the systemic imbalance between supply and demand. Despite the emerging technologies, governments have not yet devised a new, sustainable macroeconomic order that will translate industrial breakthroughs into broad prosperity.

Piore and Sabel sketch the outlines for a reconciliation of the macro and the micro spheres in a chapter entitled "Possibilities for Prosperity." They call for a strategy of globalized Keynesianism (Mitterrand's collapse suggests that Keynesianism in one country no longer works). They want coordinated economic stimulation, and a system of regional trading blocs, in order to restore the worldwide balance of supply with demand. This seems to me the correct prescription, but they do not succeed in fully probing the political obstacles—the difficulty of having so many countries coordinate economic policy. And they fudge the connection between macroeconomic breakdown and "flexible specialization" as a remedy. Specialty production and worldwide diffusion of industry are somewhat interrelated; reprogrammable production technology undoubtedly makes it easier to shift from one product to another. But too many countries would probably be making steel and textiles and cars and chemicals today, even without the changes in the factory system that Sabel and Piore deem so central.

IN SUM, their prognosis is double-edged. On the one hand, flexible specialization heralds more creative uses of technology and work, and even a more self-regulating economy. Unlike such darker prophets of technology as David Noble and Harley Shaiken (also part of the M.I.T. network of flexibly specialized economists), Piore and Sabel see reason for expecting that the new technology will enrich work, rather than degrade it, despite the unilateral power of management to use technology as it sees fit.

On the other hand, the United States is not well adapted to take advantage of the prospect, and the macroeconomic adaptation may not occur. More than any other country, the dominance of mass production in America drove out craft values. Our form of trade unionism is very suspicious of flexible anything. It sees work rules as a defense against exploitation. Our corporations are more attuned to mass markets. Flexible specialization finds a far more fertile soil in the *zaibatsu* of Japan, in the small shops and craft traditions of high-tech Italy, in the specialized industries and labor relations of Germany and Austria. A more subtle problem is a very risky interim period,

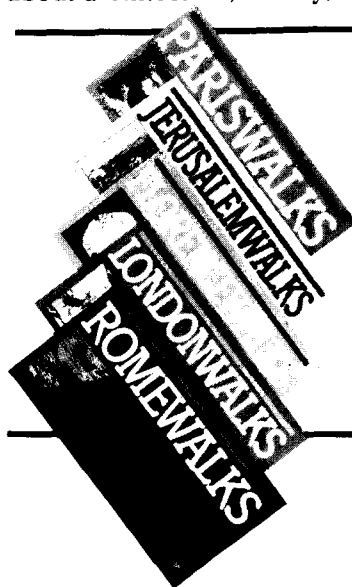
in which mass and flexible production exist side by side, and the related danger that flexible specialization will add up to global overcapacity and social chaos rather than the gentler, communitarian economy they envision.

THE BOOK'S one weakness is that it attributes a bit too much to a technological shift which is undeniable but also is not pervasive. Production may be increasingly flexible, but fewer and fewer workers are engaged in physical production at all. The vision of a restoration of communitarian and craft values is very attractive, but a close look at Silicon Valley suggests that working conditions for assemblers there are fairly grim, despite the advanced technology. Even numerically controlled machine tools, the epitome of flexible specialization, are frequently used merely as "smarter" instruments of mass production. Moreover, though these changes are indeed transforming the factory, more and more of the economy is in service sectors, which may produce just as many lousy jobs (the backrooms of banks and insurance companies) and many long-lived physical assets that demand steady customers (hospitals and schools).

These failings in part reflect the authors' ambivalence toward the doctrine of economic destiny. The book borrows from the Marxian tradition of looking carefully at the organization of production as a driving force in economic life. But it is explicitly not Marxian in rejecting the idea of historical imperatives. Industrial history, they observe, is full of technological roads not taken, of craft-like systems of production that were driven out by more "modern" industrial systems—which were not always more efficient, only more powerful. Yet in the end Piore and Sabel themselves come a bit too close to imagining that their utopia of community regained is inherent in the new technologies. And for two social scientists well versed in Marx, they are strangely silent on how the distribution of economic power dictates the course of technological choice.

But so provocative and generally useful is the analysis that these blemishes should be forgiven. The book is the product of original, well-informed minds pursuing issues that have eluded the best and the brightest of the mainstream economics profession. Other writers, among them Robert Reich, Harley Shaiken, David Noble, and be-

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fore them Alfred Chandler, Andrew Schoenfeld, Galbraith, and Schumpeter, have written about the history of technology and the organization of markets. Likewise, the shift to automated, flexible production has been widely noticed and heralded.

But Piore and Sabel's special accomplishment is to appreciate the wider economic implications of this shift, for labor relations, for capital investment, for marketing, and above all for macroeconomic growth and stability. *The Second Industrial Divide* points the

way toward a new economic synthesis radically different from the neoclassical synthesis taught in the graduate schools as scientific fact. Piore and Sabel have an unerring sense that economic reality is not a matter of universal laws, but must be rooted in time and place. Their brand of economic science is the more empirical, historical, and vivid, and there is in it the seed of an alternative and more useful approach to economic inquiry.

ROBERT KUTTNER

A PLAIN-STYLE POET

The Fact of a Doorframe:
Poems Selected and New, 1950-1984
by Adrienne Rich

(Norton, 355 pp., \$18.95, \$9.95 paper)

Because Adrienne Rich's poetry is so decisively social and psychological, and so forthright in its manner, it is tempting to review its arguments rather than its poetic character. But issues wax and lapse, and poetry, if it is good poetry, remains interesting after the topical issues it has engaged are dead letters. I will try to reflect here on the sort of poetry Rich has undertaken to write.

Rich decided, fairly early, to write in a common voice, "to do something very common, in my own way." She belongs, by this choice, to the school of William Carlos Williams—the school of poets who, however well read, refuse obvious learning a place in their lines. (This is equally the school of George Herbert.) Eliot, Auden, Pound, Crane, Moore, Lowell, Merrill—and even such unlikely poets as Ammons—write often, if not always, above the level of comprehension of the common reader; books, books, and more books underlie their vocabulary and their allusions, not to speak of their assumptions about culture. Authors who vow, like Rich, to speak for, and be readable by, the unlettered, move away from the learned side of language and lose thereby a rich, beautiful, and powerful part of themselves and of literature. They think the loss well worth the gain:

Who says that fictions only and false hair
Become a verse? Is there in truth no
beautie? . . .

Just as Herbert identified ostentatious learning with sterile "divinity" or theological hairsplitting, which he thought far from the true end of piety, so Rich seems to have identified the hermetic and "instructed" side of language with male institutional life, the life of churches and academies, a life historically unavailable to women. (Williams, the child of foreigners, abjured learned diction as too "European"; Whitman, closer to Rich, abjured it as undemocratic.)

In any case, Rich belongs to the school of plain-style poets, those who distrust, as evidence of mystification and hierarchy, ornament and embellishment in poetry. Plain-style poets ask to be judged on effectiveness, rather than on conventional ideas of "beauty": they make scant use of the elaborations of rhetoric, preferring the "horizontal" connections of contiguity to the "vertical" connections of metaphor. Though they affirm that their gaze is fixed on the actual and the historic, they are often utopian, and see the actual and the historic outlined against a Platonic social ideal. Their vision of a better world

is entirely reactive, conceived as the opposite of the unjust world they perceive in the here and now. They are not lost in visionary radiance, and their language is not ecstatic but aggrieved.

PLAIN-STYLE poets belong to the long chronicle of English and American Protestant dissent, with its history of political and religious reform. When Rich finds her own literary ancestors, she quotes women who used this Protestant voice (Susan B. Anthony, Jane Addams); she could equally well have named men like Thoreau in *Civil Disobedience*, William Lloyd Garrison, and Frederick Douglass. We find this voice in Protestant autobiography with its heightened rhetorical polarities of damnation and election, in Protestant sermons with their tides of rebuke and exhortation, and in the oratory and essays of social reform, secular descendants of the religious genres. In using this voice, Rich is writing in a central American tradition.

It is true of all literary voices that they have had fewer women than men practitioners. But in the case of the voice Rich uses, the disparity arises not solely from the relative numbers of male and female writers. Rather, it is caused chiefly, as many women writers have said, by the existence of a competing voice, one thought more "suitable" for women than this voice of Protestant personal and public drama, command, and reprobation. The competing choice is the one that Dickinson, Moore, Bishop, Sexton, and Plath repudiated as strongly as Rich repudiates it. It is the voice of girlishness, erotic pining, winsome coyness, religious submissiveness, and sentimental motherhood, the voice of the nineteenth-century woman poet. (Elizabeth Barrett Browning, because she experimented with a public voice, became the exception that proved the rule.) Even when a religious or social imperative was admitted, only positive sentiments were acceptable in a woman's writing:

But bring not thou the battle's stormy
chorus,
The tramp of armies, and the roar of
fight,
Not war's hot smoke to taint the sweet
morn o'er us
Nor blaze of pillage, reddening up the
night.
O, let thy lays prolong that angel-singing,
Girdling with music the Redeemer's
star,

And breathe God's peace, to earth 'glad
tidings' bringing
From the near heavens, of old so dim
and far!

This self-adjudation by Sarah J. Lippincott is clear enough; the "angel in the house" is to make angelic song.

Dickinson repudiated the "female" voice by blasphemy and pride; Moore, by learning and "observations"; Bishop, by homelessness and skepticism; Sexton, by parody and wildness; Plath, by anger and geometric chill. No one of these women, however, took upon herself the public voice of the political activist. (Perhaps Muriel Rukeyser is Rich's nearest predecessor in that respect.) The voice of "power"—a word Rich uses over and over again about writing—is a voice social in intent. And indeed, Rich's poetry is often treated as social poetry. I find Rich more often a personal poet, psychological rather than social (at least by comparison with Williams, for instance).

RICH'S is a poetry of conversion. Like many writers who have undergone a conversion, she wants the process she has felt to be repeated in others. What we call, from the outside, a "conversion," is often seen, by the person experiencing it, not as a change from an old self to a new one, but as the discovery of the authentic self that had been there all along, but had been forced into hiding by pressure from familial or social structures, structures experienced as intolerably powerful, even annihilating. Hence the subsequent quest of the converted for power, enough power to destroy, in turn, those structures that had proved so inhuman.

It could be argued, against Rich, that the structures she found repressive might not have been so for others. Could any social structures invented by an unoriginal heterosexual tribally grouped majority ever have been fostering ones for a child half-Jewish, half-Christian, destined to be an original writer, on the one hand, and a lesbian, on the other? Rich is only one of thousands of "outsiders" or "outlaws" (known to all social communities) who find the expectations of the herd impossible for themselves. The herd is of course—and it is the "of course" to which Rich, perhaps vainly, objects—cruel to the outlaws. Those among the "marginal" who become writers often unleash an entirely realistic anger against "the system"—variously con-

ceived as the established church, or usura, or the class structure, or the warmongers. For Rich the oppressive rule is the rule of "compulsory heterosexuality," by which she means that most women have to buy economic survival by marriage. Reformers imagine that once the offending structures have been removed, people will be free—or at least freer than they were before.

This activist view of a better reality struggling toward rebirth is profoundly opposed to the more pessimistic Freudian view in which no perfect originating structure can be imagined for the psyche, which is always wounded by its psychologically dependent status in childhood. Its repressions and Oedipal reenactments ensure the perpetuation of social conventionality and tribal hostilities. Hence the strain, in Rich, between two poetries. One is an introspective and psychologically framed poetry which retells, many times, the story of her own rebellion and struggle for self-liberation (she sees her story in those terms). The other is a more public poetry of protest, the poetry which aims at political "power." I find the first poetry—the autobiographical poetry of Protestant conversion—the more powerful.

MOST of the poetry in *The Fact of a Doorframe* has been previously published in book form. There are six new poems, and a few old "lost" or uncollected poems. The new poems, of which the most memorable is "In the Wake of Home," continue to reexamine what Rich names the two poles of her nature, "anger and tenderness." It is the anger that has chiefly defined her as a mature poet, as her own private rage gradually attached itself to various oppressed groups—women, poor women, black women, lesbian women. (It is clear that she knows that there are other oppressed groups, but that she cannot generally feel the identity with them that would provoke writing.)

Rich's own original rage, even if generated by an inborn temperament, was emotionally attached to her relationship with her father: she remembers "my Jewish father writing me/letters of seventeen pages/finely inscribed harangues/questions of loyalty and punishment/. . . And I . . . walking to my wedding/. . . a bad daughter . . . a bad sister." Her own solution had been not only to remember her primal anger but

to bring it to bear on all other conceivable wrongs suffered by women at the hands of men. One wonders where Rich's anger would have led her if she had had a kind father, and a cruel mother. It is a question one wants to have her intelligence address. She looks hard and long at her own past, but she has not looked at it dispassionately, not yet. Political wisdom insists that one must privilege one's own arguments; but intelligence sees no privileged suffering, and no privileged arguments. It sees only what Yeats called "the desolation of reality"—of all reality. Such a view is not congenial, of course, to social hopes, or to reforming temperaments, which do, it is not to be doubted, great good in the world.

"In the Wake of Home" asks, once again, the question John Stuart Mill put to himself in 1826:

"Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant: would this be a great joy and happiness to you?" And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, "No!" At this my heart sank within me: the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down. All my happiness was to have been found in the continual pursuit of this end. The end had ceased to charm, and how could there ever again be any interest in the means? I seemed to have nothing left to live for.

Rich writes of the woman for whom "home" has been unsatisfactory. Such a woman tries to believe that some homes are successful, that family burial plots and family albums reflect some long fidelity and love, "that once at least it was all in order/and nobody came to grief." Perhaps, she thinks, time when things were all right was in the anthropological past:

You imagine an alley a little kingdom
where the mother-tongue is spoken
a village of shelters woven
or sewn of hides in a long-ago way
You imagine the people would all be there
fathers mothers and children
the ones you were promised would all be
there
eating arguing working
trying to get on with life
you imagine this used to be
for everyone everywhere

The woman for whom "home" has been unsatisfactory takes on, as a substitute family, all the homeless of the earth:

What if I told you your home
is this planet of warworn children
women and children standing in line or
milling
endlessly calling each others' names
What if I tell you, you are no different
it's the family albums that lie—

So far the voice is the voice of political
solidarity. But then the voice breaks:

—will any of this comfort you
and how should this comfort you?

The last section of "In the Wake of
Home" is a reprise of the rest. Rich
scans once again "the rush of purpose
to make a life/worth living past abandon-
ment," her own long effort:

The child's soul carries on
in the wake of home
building a complicated house
a tree-house without a tree
finding places for everything
the song the stray cat the skeleton
The child's soul musters strength
where the holes were torn
but there are no miracles:
even children become exhausted
And how shall they comfort each other
who have come young to grief?
Who will number the grains of loss
and what would comfort be?

This is the Freudian question, posed
again; and it is Mill's question, too. The
early wound can be patched but not
healed; and no amount of political (or
intellectual, or poetic, or pedagogical)
action can restore primal loss. That is an
ache one will carry to the grave, incur-
able by love or action.

"In the Wake of Home" is written in
a voice usable by everyone who can en-
ter the "you" of Rich's general address.
The danger of this "collective," "us-
able" address is that it can become so
general as to be stereotypical, as I think
happens when Rich invokes those an-
cillary figures of childhood who supple-
mented our unsatisfactory parents:

And what of the stern and faithful aunt
the fierce grandmother the anxious
sister
the good teacher the one
who stood at the crossing when you had
to cross
the woman hired to love you

Rich is here as far away as possible from
Lowell's idiosyncratic, not to say eccen-
tric, family figures in *Life Studies*. Her
aesthetic is stubbornly communal, "re-
sponsible," and "accountable" (her
words in "North American Time").
Though she has irony, and knows per-
sonal exhaustion, she has no humor,
and no historical skepticism about polit-

ical effort. Her sternness, the sternness
of a secular homilist, cannot allow hu-
mor; it is to Anne Sexton or Elizabeth
Bishop that one looks for that. Rich's
great virtue is her long struggle for au-
thenticity. It has been endangered by
self-pity and by writing for a cause, but
she repeatedly has returned to self-
scrutiny and acknowledged her find-
ings. She will be remembered in literary
history as one of the first American
women to claim a public voice in lyric.
And it is not only a political audience
that she possesses (though she has that
too). I have read, and not for political
reasons, almost everything she has
written. What Rich said of Emily Dick-
inson is true of herself; she has had to

"retranslate her own unorthodox, sub-
versive, sometimes volcanic propensi-
ties" into poetry. That is always an im-
possibly difficult translation, the more
so since (as Rich says elsewhere, sound-
ing like Wallace Stevens) "There is no
'the truth,' 'a truth'—truth is not one
thing, or even a system. It is an increas-
ing complexity." From a poet who be-
lieves this, all things are to be hoped.

HELEN VENDLER

Helen Vendler teaches at Boston Uni-
versity and Harvard. Her most recent
book, *Wallace Stevens: Words Chosen Out
of Desire*, has just been published by the
University of Tennessee Press.

IRISH GIRLS, ENGLISH AFFAIRS

A Fanatic Heart: Selected Stories of Edna O'Brien by Edna O'Brien

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 461 pp., \$17.95)

This large, handsome book draws on no
fewer than five collections of Edna
O'Brien's short fiction written and pub-
lished between the mid-1960s and 1981.
Many of the stories originally appeared
in *The New Yorker*. Prolific as a novelist
also, the Irish-born author made her de-
but with *The Country Girls* (1960), fol-
lowed up her initial success swiftly with
The Lonely Girl and *Girls in Their Married
Bliss*, and by 1963 or so was an estab-
lished figure in the London literary
world. Behind her were a rural upbringing
in County Clare, a Catholic convent
education, a period of study at the
Pharmaceutical College of Ireland in
Dublin, a teenage marriage which pro-
duced two children before its dissolu-
tion in 1964, and a move to England
that is presumably permanent. Since
her marriage broke up she has pre-
ferred to remain on her own—not, one
imagines, for lack of opportunity. One
of the main things she does in her fic-
tion is write about affairs with married
men, often rich and famous ones, and
always from the vantage (or disadvan-
tage?) point of the single woman.
Whether or not Edna O'Brien's role as
historian-celebrant of The Affair in the
British consumer society could have

continued as long as it has had she mar-
ried again is at least an open question.

But the best stories in *A Fanatic Heart*
(the title is of course from Yeats, and to
preserve the proper rhythm "fanatic"
must be accented on the first syllable)
are powerful, bleak, and unforgiving;
they draw on memories of her Irish up-
bringing from about age 9 to the end of
her convent days and her departure for
pharmacy school. The best of the Eng-
lish stories about love affairs don't come
close in merit to these Irish stories,
while the worst of them are merely chic
and novelettish, something to read un-
der the hair dryer.

Take "Paradise," from her 1968 col-
lection, *The Love Object*. A woman jets
from London to a lavish Italian seaside
villa where her host and lover, a mo-
rose older man of means, summons her
to his bed on evenings when he is feel-
ing up to it. The house is crawling with
serving people and with discreetly tip-
pling and pill-popping beautiful peo-
ple. These leisure-class riff-raff spend
their days boating and picnicking, but
they are really there to provide back-
ground for the heroine's dogged efforts
to master swimming in the villa pool.
The host-lover, it seems, is most intent

on his mistress learning a simple crawl or sidestroke, has even flown in an elderly, indeed grandfatherly, English swim instructor to show her how. It is not to be. In a climactic scene the woman ventures into the pool alone, sinks like a stone, and has to be rescued and wrung out just when the host is giving his splashiest party of the season. For this unseemliness she receives her dismissal from "paradise" in the form of an airline ticket to Heathrow.

THE TITLE story of this same collection, "The Love Object," is only a little better, and it may be considered a paradigm of most O'Brien tales of the London love triangle. It provides a foot-of-the-bed fever chart of an affair between the narrator, who is 30, divorced, and a well-known face on English TV, and an elderly, "famous" married man who does something in the law. They are in bed together seventeen times, mostly afternoons and always at her house. Once she helps him to get into white tie and tails for an early evening function at Buckingham Palace. The tone and mood of the account approach barely controlled hysteria as the man starts finding other ways of spending his free afternoons. It is all so stereotypically British. We have had it before, though more chastely and less affluently, on the railway platform and in the station buffet of Noel Coward's screenplay for *Brief Encounter*.

The final section of *A Fanatic Heart* is called "Quartet: Uncollected Stories, 1979-1981." Here O'Brien writes four brief vignettes which attempt to abstract the essence, alembicate, or create a poetics of *The Affair*. If she is an English Colette in this way, then she is a failed Colette. In "Violets" the reader is privy to a seduction-in-progress at an elegant restaurant. "The Call" describes waiting for one's lover to telephone and fighting temptation to disrupt his domestic peace by phoning him oneself. "The Plan" entails a fantasy of making a friend and confidante out of the lover's wife. "The Return" is about flying back to London from a Greek holiday spent by oneself and anticipating resumption of the affair.

We know how it will end. Should we not, the mere title of an earlier story in the book, "Over," from her 1978 collection called *A Scandalous Woman*, will tell us. In these stories of English passion among top people, Edna O'Brien manages to make the

game of adultery dull and predictable.

Her Irish scene can be savage and cruel, but it is never dull. Her youthful narrator-heroine inhabits a cut-stone house in a Shannon-side hamlet where most of the neighbors are small farmers. The people are poor, slaves to custom, morally terrorized by a puritanical religious code they have internalized; and a surprisingly large number are crazy, or else afflicted with physical and mental defects and handicaps. An extra turn of the screw is supplied by the period background. It is World War II, when the Allied embargo imposed on Ireland as punishment for its neutrality caused severe shortages of food, other consumer goods, fuel, medicines, and machine parts, thus plunging the countryside into a deeper darkness and chill than would normally be the case. O'Brien's rural Ireland is remarkably like the scene depicted by William Carleton in his tales and sketches of the Irish peasantry during the decades leading up to the great famine of the 1840s, except that in Carleton there is more room for fun and festivity, dancing and singing, and a good deal of unconstrained affection between the sexes.

THE GIRL'S family is a cut above the neighbors, but is heading down in the world as the feckless father neglects the farm, brutalizes his wife during episodes of spree drinking, and sells off land to finance thoroughbred blood stock experiments which never work out. The daughter dotes on her tireless and grimly dutiful mother—the two share a bed in the time-honored Irish way—and hates her father for his disruption of the household. But underneath one knows there is a steely resolve never to repeat the mother's sacrifices and some covert admiration for the rampant male at his most obstreperous. (It is intriguing that O'Brien, in an interview by Philip Roth recently published in *The New York Times Book Review*, averred that her ideal life would consist of successive phases of work, cavorting, and penance. She is a long way from County Clare in her new stately home in Maida Vale, but still seems trying to draw the diverse influences of mother, father, and the Catholic religion into a sort of loose unity.)

Her fullest treatment of the theme of love and interdependence between mother and daughter in this volume is the fine story called "A Rose in the Heart of New York": "The mother said

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that there was no such thing as love between the sexes and that it was all bull. She reaffirmed that there was only one kind of love and that was a mother's love for her child." Significantly, this is followed by a moment "dense with hate" on the part of the daughter, and of course the close, supportive relationship leads to mutual bitterness and regrets after the daughter has grown up, gone abroad, and prospered. Drawn back to Ireland for her mother's funeral she finds an envelope stuffed with money in a hiding place only she and her mother had known about. She looks vainly for a note,

concocting little tendernesses that her mother might have written—words such as "Buy yourself a jacket," or "Have a night out," or "Don't spend this on Masses." She wanted something, some communiqué. But there was no such thing.

VIRTUALLY epic in its treatment of the mother-daughter bond from birth to death, "A Rose" must be judged a classic of the new literature that bears the mark of the women's movement. With it one might want to place the haunting nun's story, "Sister Imelda," in which O'Brien's surrogate narrator finds a mother surrogate and near-lover at her convent school, only in the end to break the tie quite brutally as she comes to see that her ambitious future lies with the secular world. "Sister Imelda" is as good as the best parts of George Moore's novel of 1901, *Sister Teresa*, which is to say that it is very good indeed. Edna O'Brien is like Moore, and quite unlike either Joyce/Beckett or the stay-at-home group comprised by O'Connor, O'Faolain, and O'Flaherty, in that she has written on both Irish and English subjects while maintaining her principal residence in London. Too bad that the absolute superiority of her Irish stories over her English stories makes this big collection of collections so much of a mixed bag.

A few recommendations to end: "The Connor Girls," for its cheeky Papist perspective on the very fag end of the Anglo-Irish "big house" tradition; "Savages" and "A Scandalous Woman," for their revelations of how Irish rural society victimizes women too doty or naïve to conceal their sexual feelings under a layering of shawls and scapulars; "Ghosts," for a really successful use of the vignette technique—the sub-

ject is three unforgettable women from the narrator's Irish memories; "The Rug," for a final poignant glimpse of the mother, who one day received the anonymous gift of a beautiful sheepskin rug in the mail, loved it, was illuminated by the kindness of the hidden donor, only to learn after a few weeks that the rug had been delivered to her home by mistake:

"We live and learn," she said, as she un-

did her apron-strings, out of habit, and then retied them slowly and methodically, making a tighter knot.

JULIAN MOYNAHAN

Julian Moynahan teaches English at Rutgers University. He is currently completing a book on Anglo-Irish writers from Maria Edgeworth to Beckett, Bowen, and after.

HISTORY, TRAGEDY, FARCE

The Rise of the French Communist Party, 1920-1947

by Edward Mortimer

(Faber and Faber, 431 pp., \$65)

The eighteenth Congress of France's Unified Socialist Party opened at Tours on Christmas Day 1920. Before it had ended four days later, the Unified Socialists would divide in two. One group was a rump that clung to the memory of Jaurès, the S.F.I.O. (French Section of the Workers' International), henceforth a member of the old International reconstituted in Vienna, to be derisively known as the 2½ International. The other was a majority whose vote attached it to the Third International, set up in Moscow in March 1919: the S.F.I.C. (French Section of the Communist International), a term long used concurrently with that of P.C.F. (French Communist Party).

It was not the first time, nor the last, that French socialists had split on doctrine or on tactics. But no one realized that the split, this time, would turn into history—for sixty-four years at least—and that the arguments of 1920 would be rehearsed two generations later. If history repeats itself, the farces of the past here turned to tragedy. As a speaker put it on the night of the break: "Some do not believe in the greatness of the Russian Revolution, in its duration, in its power. This is the tragic point of the debate." It was tragic (though understandable) that so many did. But it is only retrospectively that the Congress of Tours appears as a milestone in the history of the French left (and a millstone around its neck). Edward Mortimer's excellent book places its outcome and its reper-

cussions in perspective.

Like the Russian Revolution, Communist parties were creatures of discomfiture. French Socialists and syndicalists, divided on many issues, had joined together before 1914 to preserve peace, and they had failed. No strike disrupted mobilization in August 1914, no popular rising marred the patriotic union of that summer, prelude to the slaughter of four years. Both C.G.T. (the trade union congress) and S.F.I.O. had failed to avert war, or to answer war with revolution, or to use the post-war revolutionary situation to give the working class the triumph that it hoped for. They came out of the war divided, disorganized, discredited, the more so when their failures were contrasted with the success of Bolshevism in Russia. French labor would look to Russia and to Bolshevism for the model of a well-organized party, uncompromising and revolutionary.

Enthusiasm for the Russian Revolution and for Bolshevism went together with ignorance about it. For libertarian leftists like Georges Pioch, communism was "the organized form of love." For working men—especially for the least politicized among them—communism was a promise of action, an answer to their "yearnings for equal division of unequal earnings." Where French working-class leaders, few boasting working-class origins, talked about revolution, the Russians made it. Annie Kriegel tells of the old working man, muddled by endless debate about the

competing virtues of rival Internationals, asking: "Which is Lenin's International?" "The Third." "Then that's mine."

SYMPATHY for the Communist International did not mean interest in the detail of the Twenty-One Conditions that the International set for admission to it: among them, the requirement that Communists break with reformism and opportunism, and that they introduce democratic centralism—an iron discipline in a centralized organization. The men who voted for the Third International, like those who negotiated for admission to it, objected to the principle of rules and regulations dictated from Moscow, and expected to preserve freedom of expression within the party and freedom of maneuver outside. They hoped to join the Comintern despite its conditions. Conditions, after all, were no more than words. They soon found out that words were made to eat. And since Bolshevik discipline could not be reconciled to French traditions, traditional Socialist slackness was soon replaced by subservience to Moscow. As Marcel Cachin declared when he returned from Moscow in 1920, "When a French Socialist meets such men [as the Bolsheviks] he has lessons to take; he has none to give." Cachin would remain editor of *l'Humanité* until his death in 1958. No wonder Zinoviev felt that the only way to talk to such types was with a horsewhip.

What old-style politicians took for familiar verbiage was about reality, and reality was about allegiance to Moscow. The old Western Social-Democratic parties with their democratic baggage had to be "bolshevized," said the Comintern slogan of 1924: centralized, bureaucratized, turned into tight, disciplined instruments of revolution, rid of the old opportunist survivors who would never make real revolutionaries, endowed with others who would—many of them the heirs of revolutionary syndicalism. And Mortimer is very good about showing the laborious wooing of refractory syndicalists, the split of Communist sympathizers from the great C.G.T., and the long-term importance for the Communists of being the only political party to control a trade union movement of its own—however weak this remained until the 1940s.

Whatever their provenance, however, or their ideological stance, those who tried to withstand Moscow's dic-

tates would be ousted, one clique after another, outmaneuvered, sapped by their own indecisions. The early history of the P.C.F. is best visualized as a *panier de crabes*: a basketful of unattractive crustaceans preying on each other. Yet, even while isolated by its refusal to compromise, as by the hostility it showed to social democrats, this Communist leadership was busy building a party of a new type: homogeneous, disciplined, easy to maneuver. As the intellectuals, men of letters, journalists, and minor politicians who provided early leadership fell by the wayside, the party leadership henceforth would be drawn from workers. After 1926, all top party leaders boasted unimpeachably working-class backgrounds and owed their importance and most of their education to the Party and to the Soviet Union. This helps explain why so many working men have steadfastly recognized them as their own. It also accounts for their unwillingness to adopt independent positions, an attitude in sharp contrast to that of the Italian Communists, led by middle-class intellectuals.

LACK OF independence would be enhanced by the presence of powerful Comintern emissaries: in the 1920s, Humbert Droz, a Swiss; in the '30s, after Thorez had established himself as His Masters' Voice, a team of East Europeans headed by a Czech, Eugen Fried (in due course the inventor of the term "Popular Front"). Especially after 1931, the P.C.F. would be brought to heel as no other party was: a foreign nationalist party, as Léon Blum described it.

Such domestication was crucial to the Russians when, as Zinoviev pointed out, Paris was the headquarters of world imperialism, and the French bourgeoisie the heart of world reaction. It became even more important once the founding premise of the Comintern—that the survival of revolution in Russia depends on the spread of revolution through the rest of Europe—was reversed, and the survival of revolutionary hopes was henceforth affirmed to rest on Russia, with the Comintern becoming simply the instrument of Soviet policy. But it also carried all the drawbacks of subservience to an international mafia: French national concerns taking a back seat, the power struggles in Moscow taking precedence. As Mortimer chronicles one purge after another (the 1920s in detail,

the 1950s in short shrift), an implacable continuity asserts itself, maintained by heroic impermeability to its more preposterous or comic—or historical—aspects. Those leading the party witch-hunts of the day turn into the scapegoats of the morrow. The anti-Trotskyist crusaders of 1924 would be expelled as Trotskyists in 1927-28. The opponents of Thorez's legalism of the '40s would pay for his failure in the '50s. Those who proposed to zig when Moscow zagged would be condemned; but so were those who had stood for zagging, once Moscow switched to zig. And, if we are to believe the accusations brought against disgraced leaders, the P.C.F. seems to have been largely organized or disorganized by police spies.

Subservience also went with uncritical adoption of analyses and slogans far removed from French realities. In Moscow's eyes, the France of the '20s and the early '30s was going fascist, the class struggle was growing more acute, the working classes turning more radical. The Socialists of the S.F.I.O. were social fascists (as in Germany, where the term was coined), their leaders denounced as the true enemies of the

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working class, their eventual destruction regarded as a positive good. It was so greeted in the German case, where the Comintern (appropriately on April Fools' Day 1933) rejoiced to see the "establishment of undisguised Fascist dictatorship dispelling the democratic illusions of the masses [and] accelerating Germany's march towards a proletarian revolution."

Such policies ensured that, until 1934, party membership should remain low, the Communist impact on France quite small. In those early years, as later, what support there was came from three distinct groups: the workers of Paris and of a few other industrial centers; rural voters, especially small farmers in more backward areas, who had

inherited the radical republican tradition of opposition to the powerful and the rich; and intellectuals, especially the intelligentsia of Paris, eager to break window panes that it would take too long to clean, and those for whom, as for Paul Nizan, Marxism offered the only coherent intellectual system to oppose the faded postivism of the academic establishment. Here, Mortimer gives us an enlightening section on the Surrealist episode, Breton's revolutionary commitment, Aragon's progress from indifference to wild enthusiasm, not unconnected with the color of Elsa's eyes: "Shoot the cops/Comrades/Shoot the cops . . . Fire on Léon Blum/Fire on Boncour, Frossard, Deat/Fire on the trained bears of Social-Democracy,"

and other classics. He also points out one of the Comintern's greatest achievements in this period: preventing the left-wing intelligentsia in the West from taking any interest in the victims of mass purges and deportations occurring in the Soviet Union.

ALL THIS remained marginal until 1934, when Communist strategy abandoned the theory of imminent revolutionary crisis for a defensive alliance with the middle classes, which was supposed to head off the rise of fascism. Preserving bourgeois democracy today would safeguard the chances of revolution tomorrow, went the new theory; and fortunately by this time the party had been equipped with an inner core of experienced militants who did not question instructions but executed them swiftly and efficiently. In a complete turnabout, Thorez stretched out his hand to blue- and white-collar workers alike, to Catholics, to *Croix de Feu*, to practically everybody who would listen to the sweet murmur of French virtues and patriotism. Overnight, and with admirable discipline, the militants exalted what they had vilified, championed a broad interclass alliance in the name of national unity, extolled the patriotic ideals they had long derided—the flag, the *Marseillaise*—and thus, at last, secured the popular success that long eluded them. Membership, which stood at 42,000 in 1934, had doubled the following year, and climbed to almost 300,000 by 1936. With brief breaks (1939-40, 1947-52), the P.C.F. would remain the national party that it became in the mid-1930s. Beginning with the municipal elections of 1935, it also established a reputation as the party of honest, efficient city government—a reputation that waned only in the early 1980s.

But, even propped up by anti-fascist slogans, the middle classes lacked the fighting spirit. Ironically, as Mortimer observes, the Popular Front in power did less than right-wing governments might have done to further alliance with Russia against Nazi Germany. For the Communists' Socialist allies, the Nazi menace was to be conjured away not by force, but by moderation and understanding. As Socialists and radicals applied Britain's recipes for dealing with dictators—nonintervention, appeasement—morale ebbed and the brief unity of 1936 waned. In Moscow, meanwhile, where the anti-fascist line reflect-

FALL

Carpenter, Mechanic, and I:
it is our yearly hunting trip
to this game-rich, splendid, dirt-poor margin
of Maine. There is always rain and a gale,
and one or two
bluebird days just to break the heart.
We're good at this thing we do,
but for each bird that falls,
three get by us and go
wherever the things that get by us go.

To the realm of baby shoe and milk tooth;
kingdom of traduced early vow,
of the hedge's ghost, humming with rabbit and rodent,
under the mall's macadam. All that seemed
fixed in the eye. I,
according to Mechanic,
is too melancholic. Yes, says Carpenter,
and talks when he ought to be doing.
We all watch the canny Setter, with her nose
like a Geiger counter.

"There's not much gets by her,"
we repeat each year, admiring, after she's flashed on point
and *shaaa!*—in redundant wind another grouse flies wild.
Air and ridge and water now all take
the color of week-old blood. Or years-old ink.
We are such friends it's sad.
Not long until we stalk before winter the heavy-horned
bucks that slide past,
spirit-quiet, in spare brush.
Then Carpenter and Mechanic in their loud mackinaws will seem

interruptions on the skyline of the sky's
clean slate. And so will I.

SYDNEY LEA

ed German hostility to Russia even more than ideological differences, Stalin realized that possibilities of alliance with the West were slight, the profits of such alliance even slighter. The German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August 21, 1939, which drew the conclusion of his appreciation, left the P.C.F. more lost than anybody else. Yet the party stuck to its patriotic line for another month, until orders from Moscow turned it about: the war was not an anti-fascist people's war after all, but a classic imperialist conflict which Communists had to oppose. The French government, more interested in fighting Communists at home than Germans abroad, promptly banned the party and arrested those of its deputies on whom it could lay its hands. Clandestine Communist propaganda now proceeded to justify allegations of treason: it defended Russia's invasion of Poland, attacked French and British warmongers, defamed Léon Blum, gradually shifted from pacifism to a stance that was virtually pro-German. In March 1940, a government decree introduced the death penalty for Communist propaganda. Never applied by the Third Republic, both Vichy and the Germans would find it handy.

MORTIMER reminds us that when the Germans entered Paris in June 1940, Communists requested and received German permission to resume publication of *l'Humanité*—a permission only withdrawn at the request of the Vichy authorities, which continued more hostile to communism than to fascism. Communist hopes for collaboration, however, did not end there. The clandestine *Humanité* continued to write about Franco-German fraternity, Communist deputies offered to give evidence at the forthcoming Riom trial of republican leaders. But the Germans and, *a fortiori*, Pétain ignored their advances and, by winter, German imperialism had joined that of the British on the Communists' long list of deplorable evils. Before long, the German attack on Russia would save them further wavering and let them demonstrate their virtues in a resistance for which they were uniquely equipped, and which left the Communist Party as one of only two real political forces in liberated France.

Many had expected liberation to usher in social revolution; and not a few Communists retained the conviction that "at Liberation we missed the bus."

In fact, though, when General de Gaulle granted amnesty to Thorez in 1944—Thorez had deserted in 1939, and spent the war in Moscow—he assumed that the General Secretary would get the party firmly under control. De Gaulle was right. The party bureaucracy reasserted its authority, absorbing resistance leaders, diluting their power, demoting them for being too sectarian, or for lacking flexibility, and finally expelling them in the purges of the 1950s.

More important, with the P.C.F. the strongest political force in France, Thorez, who headed the largest group in Parliament, could hope that a strategy similar to that which actually worked in Czechoslovakia would bring French Communism to power without revolution, without the Red Army, simply by using the opportunities afforded by existing democratic institutions. Hence his emphasis on renewing French democracy, reconstructing the French economy, rebuilding a reunited trade union movement that the party now controlled. Hence, too, in 1945 and early 1946, the Communist attacks against "reactionary" leftism appealing only to the backward masses, against colonial nationalism as a fascist conspiracy, against striking workers (who, as the Communist Minister of Labor pointed out in 1946, had never gone on strike against the Germans). Hence also the bitterness of disillusion after 1947, when the Communists, outmaneuvered by Socialist Guy Mollet, their parliamentary strategy bankrupt, found themselves turfed out of the cabinet and out in the cold again. That was when class hatreds bottled up over long years were released at last in wild strikes, which were broken by another Socialist: Jules Moch. Over and over, the minority defeated at Tours reappeared as nemesis.

THE '50s, like the '20s, saw the Communists politically isolated; the hierarchy replicating Russian and East European purges; the party suffering under the impact of the Prague coup, the Berlin blockade, the break with Tito, the political trials in the East; its membership and its share of the electoral pie shrinking. Yet, even when relegated to the margin of French political life, the P.C.F. remained strong, and its exclusion from parliamentary majorities decisively altered the balance of French politics. No majority of the left was possible without them; and none could be

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envisaged with them, until, in the 1960s, François Mitterrand reopened the door to collaboration and the P.C.F., underrating his capacity (and that of a discredited Socialist Party) agreed to support him on the basis of essentially reformist options. It only stopped supporting him a short while ago, justifying Joseph Caillaux's view that it would not be the revolutionaries but the *Conseil d'Etat* (the Supreme Court) which would carry out the social revolution. Despite constant twists and turns, George Marchais's commitment to a "French road to socialism," including patriotism, democracy, pluralism, and freedom of speech, has carried the party far from the Twenty-One Conditions of 1920, and a long way back to the opportunism and the revisionism that the Conditions had been meant to end.

Marchais, who has been General Secretary since 1972, has not succeeded in stemming the Communist ebb which has seen their national support—nearly a third of the total electorate in 1946—fall by 1981 to the 15 percent mark they had attained in 1936. Even the intellectuals, weary of Marxism, seem to prefer equally old-fashioned alternatives. Per-

haps the problems of the economy, and the Socialists' very moderate success in dealing with them, will help them to recover. They remain, after all, in leadership and in tradition, the workingman's obvious recourse. But it is not certain that an economy where the proportion of industrial labor is shrinking fast favors their long-term interests; or that an elderly Communist leadership and party policies that look remarkably like a Poujadism of the left, are poised to cash in on Socialist failures.

Edward Mortimer has written an enlightening book: lucid, balanced, highly readable. He has dug up no new information, and does not pretend to do so. But in a realm where prejudice and confusion reign, a sane, well-informed guide through the thickets of the surviving past is a remarkable contribution.

EUGEN WEBER

Eugen Weber, author of *Action Française and Peasants Into Frenchmen* (Stanford University Press), is professor of history at U.C.L.A.

There is only one work of Arabian travel and adventure for which I have an abiding and unreserved admiration and affection, and this is Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands*, originally published in 1959 and now reissued in the United States by the Viking Press. Thesiger was in his mid-30s when he first set foot in Arabia, but his life up to that time had already been filled with enough adventures and gallant endeavors to satisfy most men for a lifetime. Born before the First World War in Addis Ababa, where his father was the British minister, he spent his childhood in Ethiopia before going to England to be educated at Eton and Oxford. Returning to Ethiopia as a young man, he made the first of what was to become a series of dangerous and lonely explorations of the world's wild places by traversing the savage Danakil country on the borders of Somaliland. He then joined the Sudan Political Service and served for a few years in the more remote parts of that country. When the war came in 1939 he fought in the Ethiopian campaign, later in Syria, and finally with the Special Air Service Regiment in the Western Desert. After the war he joined the British Middle East Anti-Locust Unit, not out of a fascination with entomology, but because the work gave him the chance to achieve his ambition to penetrate the unexplored fastnesses of southern and eastern Arabia.

The geography of the Arabian peninsula south of the twenty-fourth parallel is dominated by the vast expanse of sand wastes known to the Badu of central Arabia as *al-Rub' al-Khali*, or "the Empty Quarter," and to the southern Badu simply as *al-Rimal*, "the sands." Only two Westerners had ever traversed the sands. Both had been Englishmen, Bertram Thomas in the winter of 1930-31 and Harry St. John Philby a year later. Thomas had made his crossing of the sands from the south, starting from Dhufar, the southernmost province of the Sultanate of Oman, and emerging at the base of the Qatar peninsula, on the Arabian coast of the Gulf. Philby set out from the north, from the Jabrin Oasis in Saudi territory, and returned by way of Sulaiyil in the west, after almost reaching the southernmost edge of the sands, north of the Mahra country. Like Thomas, Philby traveled by way of the central sands, roughly along Meridian 51° E, where there were known to be wells and the going was

Reconsideration: Wilfred Thesiger

A SAGA OF THE SANDS

By J. B. KELLY

ONE OF THE the most overworked quotations in the English language is Walter de la Mare's "He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia, / They have stolen his wits away." Yet hackneyed though these lines are, they nevertheless contain within them an undeniable truth—Arabia does cast a spell over many Westerners, not all of whom by any stretch of the imagination can be classified as gullible romantics or footloose misfits yearning for alien shores.

The classic works about the lure of the desert and the mystique of the Badu are usually held to be Charles Dough-

ty's *Arabia Deserta* and T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. For my part, I have always had difficulty in appreciating either work, for reasons mainly but not exclusively connected with their literary qualities. Doughty, though unquestionably a scholar of distinction, has a style somewhat too rich for my blood. His majestic cadences tend too often to become turgid and opaque sonorities. Lawrence I find even more unsatisfactory, not only because his narrative of his own exploits is a tissue of half-truths, inventions, and misrepresentations, but also because it is couched in a prose which is stilted and contrived, straining always for epic effect and achieving for the most part mere flatulence.

J. B. Kelly is the author of *Arabia, the Gulf and The West* (Basic Books).

not so difficult as it would have been in the western or eastern sands.

Thesiger made his first journey in southern Arabia in the winter of 1945-46—from Salalah on the coast of Dhufar to the Wadi Mughshin, 200 miles inland, to ascertain whether it was a locust breeding ground. He learned from the Badu of the Rashid and Bait Kathir, the only tribes that regularly frequented the sands east of Meridian 51° E, that most of the Rub al-Khali was rendered impassable by the Uruq al-Mutaridah, an immensity of high sands covering hundreds of square miles without a drop of water to be found in any of them. Beyond the Uruq al-Mutaridah, to the east, a crossing was feasible, though it was hazardous in the extreme, the way being blocked in places by massive sand ranges.

Thesiger refused to be deterred by the warning. A year later, in the fall of 1946, he was back in Dhufar, determined to attempt a crossing of the eastern sands. Recruiting a handful of Rashid and Bait Kathir as guides, he set out northward from Mughshin in the last week of November. It would be egregious to try to summarize here the travails, the sufferings, and the ultimate triumph of the journey that followed, when Thesiger has himself described them so matchlessly in *Arabian Sands*. Some idea of what he and his Badu companions faced, and what they overcame through courage and resolution as they struggled across a waterless desolation, may be gained from his account of their surmounting of the fearsome barrier of the Uruq al-Shaiba.

A high unbroken dune-chain stretched across our front. It was not of uniform height, but, like a mountain range, consisted of peaks and connecting passes. Several of the summits appeared to be seven hundred feet above the salt-flat in which we stood. The southern face confronting us was very steep, which meant that this was the lee side to the prevailing winds.

Thesiger despaired that they would ever get the camels up and over the monstrous wall of sand.

Here on the lee side of this range a succession of great faces flowed down in unruffled sheets of sand, from the top to the very bottom of the dune. They were unscalable, for the sand was poised always on the verge of avalanching, but they were flanked by ridges where the sand was firmer and the inclines easier. It was possible to force a circuitous way up these

slopes, but not all were practicable for camels, and from below it was difficult to judge their steepness. Very slowly, a foot at a time, we coaxed the unwilling beasts upward. Each time we stopped I looked up at the crests where the rising wind was blowing streamers of sand into the void, and wondered how we should ever reach the top. Suddenly we were there.

Exhilarated, Thesiger exclaimed to his Rashidi guide that they had overcome the most formidable obstacle of the journey. The guide quickly disillusioned him. This was *not* the Uruq al-Shaiba.

THE NEXT morning Thesiger had his first sight of the dreaded sand massif, "a rose red, mountainous range of sand, very lovely in the light of dawn as it rose in jagged peaks and spurs 500 to 700 feet above the ice-colored sabkhas [salt flats]." Somehow the men and camels made their way up the precipitous slopes of the massif, only to find at the summit that three smaller dune chains rode upon its back. Beyond them the sand fell away to a salt-flat far below. On the far side of the salt-flat towered a further range, even higher, it seemed, than the one just crossed. Thesiger felt his very spirit drain from him.

I looked round, seeking instinctively for some escape. There was no limit to my vision. Somewhere in the ultimate distance the sands merged into the sky, but in that infinity of space I could see no living thing, not even a withered plant to give me hope. The silence flowed over me, drowning the voices of my companions and the fidgeting of their camels.

Worn out though they were, and near delirious from hunger and thirst, he and his Badu forced themselves to descend to the *sabkha*, cross it, and with painful slowness make their way to the top of the succeeding sand range. Finally they were across the Uruq al-Shaiba.

Thesiger's crossing of the eastern sands ended on the southern outskirts of the Liwa oasis, which no Westerner had ever set eyes on before. He returned to Dhufar by way of the Oman steppes, again being the first Westerner to traverse them. It was a perilous journey, for the steppe tribes had vowed to kill any Christian who set foot in their lands.

Thesiger's subsequent journeys in the early months of 1947 through the Hadramaut and across the steppes to the north were, if anything, even more beset with danger. For throughout

these years there was constant turmoil along the entire length of the eastern and southern steppes of Arabia, from the Buraimi oasis in the north east to the Raidat Al-Sa'ar in the southwest, as the Badu tribes of the steppes and the border sands—the Dahm, the Karab, the Sa'ar, the Awamir, the Manahil, the Rashid, the Bait Kathir and the Duru—raided and counter-raided into one another's territory, unchecked for the most part by any sovereign authority.

In the early months of 1948 Thesiger made a crossing of the western sands from Munwakh on the Hadramaut steppes to Sulaiyil, and continued on in a sweeping traverse northward and eastward, by way of Laila and Jabrin across the Jafurah desert and through the Dhafrah and the Liwa oasis to Abu Dhabi. His last two great journeys were made in the winters of 1948-49 and 1949-50, into the interior of Oman as far as the Wahibah sands and back to the Buraimi oasis. As with all his journeys, these final traverses yielded a wealth of information about the topography, tribes, politics, and economy of eastern and southern Arabia, most of which was published by the Royal Geographical Society. Not the least of Thesiger's accomplishments was his skill as a photographer. The photographs in *Arabian Sands* are nothing short of magnificent. Some, like that of the Jabal Kaur in Oman, taken from the Hamra Duru, have a sweeping grandeur to them; while others, like that of the girl of the Sa'ar at Manwakh well, have such an immediacy, such an intensity of life about them, that they create in the viewer a sense of being actually present at the instant they were taken.

WHAT REMAINS with the reader, above all, after he has turned the last page of *Arabian Sands*, is the memory of the Badu with whom Thesiger traveled, on foot and by camel, for more than 10,000 miles through southern and eastern Arabia, and with whom he experienced danger, deprivation, triumph, and despair. Without their skills, their endurance, and their care-free indifference to the safety of their own skins, he could never, as he acknowledges time and again, have accomplished what he did. They pass through the pages of *Arabian Sands* in valiant procession—Salm bin Kabina, Salim bin Ghabaisha, Musallim bin Tafl, Muhammad al-Auf, and their kinsmen of the Rashid and Bait Kathir—each of

them stamping the impression of his character, his virtues, his foibles, and his idiosyncracies indelibly upon our minds.

Thesiger's last visit to southeastern Arabia was made in 1977, after an absence of twenty-seven years. It was not a happy return, despite his pleasure at meeting some of his old companions again. In a somewhat perfunctory preface to the new edition of his book he makes plain his distaste for what the age of oil had done to Arabia in the intervening years. Though it distressed him, it did not surprise him. He had foreseen and already lamented the inevitable desecration of the desert, "littered with discarded junk imported from Europe and America," when he first wrote *Arabian Sands*. What he deplored most was the demoralization of the Badu, which the violation of their desert sanctuaries was bound to bring in its train. "Now they are being driven out of the desert into towns where the qualities which once gave them mastery are no longer sufficient. Forces as uncontrollable as the droughts which so often killed them in the past have destroyed the economy of their lives. Now it is not death but degradation which faces them."

CORRESPONDENCE, from page 2

would be something to be rejoiced about.

As for all the nonsense about Mr. Sharon's being unprincipled and undemocratic, not one iota of solid evidence has ever shown that Mr. Sharon has violated the national principles. In fact the general is in court right now trying to clear his reputation, which was so brutally sullied by *Time* magazine. Mr. Sharon and company have already shown (witness the judge's refusal to dismiss the case) that *Time* was factually incorrect when it reported on his complicity in the Sabra-Shatila massacres; his lawyers have yet to prove that *Time* acted with malice.

The "unconscionable" decision to allow Phalangists into the refugee camps was foolish, I would agree. But what was the alternative? The P.L.O. was hiding there and had to be rooted out. Mr. Sharon's (and Mr. Begin's) reasoning went thus: the less Israeli lives lost, the better. Let the Lebanese deal with other Lebanese, whose tactics they know. Stupid, maybe. But not "unconscionable."

KENNETH STEINER
Ann Arbor, Michigan

TRB, from page 4

American law generally holds that vaccine manufacturers are liable for defects in their products, even if there was no negligence. (Our doctrine of "strict liability" is one reason the Bhopal ambulance chasers are eager to try their cases in America.) But the law does not permit vaccine manufacturers to recover all the benefits of health and happiness that come from the vast majority of their products that are not defective. As a result, there is now a shortage of whooping cough vaccine, and the government has told doctors not to give booster shots to children over 1 year old. And the result of that is that more children will die of whooping cough. But that is a risk for which there is no one to sue.

Pesticides of the sort manufactured by the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal have been central to the green revolution, which has made India self-sufficient in food. One estimate is that pesticides have saved 10 percent of the annual food crop. That would be about 15 million tons, or enough to feed 70 million to 80 million people.

There's no reason to assume that the social risk-benefit trade-off should be the same for a poor nation like India as for a rich nation like the United States. Environmental health and safety are to some extent luxury goods. The richer you are, the more of them you can afford. It's already clear that, for a variety of reasons, safety standards were not as high at the Bhopal plant as they are at similar plants in America. This is inevitable. Yet if American lawyers manage to apply American standards retrospectively to the Third World through lawsuits, one result will be less industrial development in the Third World. That would be no favor.

This is not meant to absolve Union Carbide, in advance, of all charges of carelessness. The plant might have been badly run, and a certain callousness about safety standards in the Third World might even have been part of the reason. Or maybe the plant shouldn't have been built at all. ("We're thrusting twentieth-century technology into countries which aren't yet ready to deal with it," a chemical expert told Cathy Trost of *The Wall Street Journal*.) The point, though, is that American-style mass tort litigation is guaranteed to produce the wrong answer to these questions.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR has recently reviewed and recommends.

The Burn by Vassily Aksyonov (Random House). An epic portrait of the surreal and, alas, so real, landscape of Soviet life. (Reviewed 12/31/84)

Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence by Warren F. Kimball (Princeton University Press). World War II, as witnessed and waged by two great leaders and good friends. (12/24/84)

Family Dancing by David Leavitt (Knopf). A collection of well-paced portraits of family life from a new writer. (12/24/84)

Zhou Enlai: A Biography by Dick Wilson (Viking). The mixed career of Mao's closest comrade. (12/3/84)

T. S. Eliot: A Life by Peter Ackroyd (Simon & Schuster). An intelligent, lucid biography of the poet, critic, and man. (12/17/84)

The Fateful Alliance: France, Russia, and the Coming of the First World War by George Kennan (Pantheon). A grim scholarly study of political and military shortsightedness. (11/5/84)

Slavery and Human Progress by David Brion Davis (Oxford University Press). A meditation on the morals and methods of studying slavery. (11/26/84)

Bright Lights, Big City by Jay McInerney (Vintage Books). A funny first novel about getting wired and getting tired in Manhattan. (12/3/84)

The New Politics of Inequality by Thomas Byrne Edsall (Norton). A brilliant analysis of class, ideology, and money in politics. (10/29/84)

The Nature of the Child by Jerome Kagan (Basic). A challenging look at the family and its influence. (11/5/84)

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Schizos in Your Stocking

MY COPY of the December 1984 "Golden Collector's Issue" of *Esquire* arrives and, like thousands of other disgruntled subscribers, I see that my name is not listed among the 272 on the "Esquire Register" of "men and women under 40 who are changing America." I do make a cameo appearance in one of the profiles, however, in the role of Mephistopheles—advising one of the "honorees" during our college days many years ago that money is more important than ideals, and he should therefore sell out his principles. He wisely chose to ignore this advice, with the result that he now has more money than me and more principles, too. How irritating! Another friend points out that it could be worse: the list includes his archrival. "It's bad enough when your friends do well," he opines, "but when your enemies succeed it's really intolerable."

THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS has been sold to a newspaperman from Mississippi. *The New York Review* is unique among intellectual publications because it actually makes money. Having never worked for a profitable publication, I've always wondered how they do it. A report on the sale in *The Wall Street Journal* offers a clue. According to the *Journal*, the *Review* last year spent about \$45,000 on articles, \$60,000 on lunches and travel for the editors, and over \$100,000 for messengers. Back when I had control of an editorial budget, the first thing I did was to crack down on expense accounts and messengers in order to pay a bit more to starving writers. I see now this was a terrible mistake. Clearly the key to a successful publication is that the writers should be hungry and the editors should be well-fed. And so that the contrast does not get too dispiriting for either group, all transactions between them should be conducted by messenger.

THE NEW YORK REVIEW'S new owner expresses complete confidence in the journal's current editors, thus setting up another test for Kinsley's Law of Magazines, which holds that new owners always replace the editor, especially if they begin by expressing complete confidence. (It's a corollary of the larger

proposition that rich men don't buy expensive toys for other people to play with.) In my day, I've been both the beneficiary and the victim of this law. It's pretty ironclad. But then so is the law that says serious journals don't make money. Mr. Hederman, the new owner, would have to be pretty stupid to start mucking around with *The New York Review's* current management or formula. But that brings me to another law about magazine owners which I'd just as soon not get into, except to observe that of course it doesn't apply to THE NEW REPUBLIC.

A LOT OF KIDS' TOYS are pretty sick-o these days, but I was astonished to read that almost a million units have been sold of a doll described by its own manufacturer, right on the box, as "an extreme paranoid schizophrenic." Zartan the Enemy is marketed by Hasbro as an adversary of its wildly successful G.I. Joe. The box helpfully explains that Zartan "grows into various multiple personalities to such an extent that the original personality becomes buried and forgotten." (Batteries not included.) A.P. reports that Hasbro has agreed to remove the bit about paranoid schizophrenia in future pressings of Zartan, under pressure from mental-health groups concerned that kids will grow up thinking that all mentally ill people are grotesque killers. So now kids will grow up thinking that grotesque killers with multiple personalities are perfectly normal. Zartan is part of the current trend among toymakers of providing a larger cultural context for their dolls. If you create, say, a doll called "Literary Lucy," you don't just give her bloodshot eyes and stick her in a box with a little plastic scotch-on-the-rocks and a pen that really writes. You include a brochure explaining that she lives in a rent-controlled apartment on the Upper West Side, writes reviews for *The Nation*, has a longstanding feud with Renata Adler, recently got fired as a manuscript reader by the new owner of *The New York Review of Books*, intends to kill him, was born on another planet with secret destructo-laser fingernails ideally suited to this purpose, and so on. A Tufts psychiatry professor, quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, worries that the new-style dolls "discour-

age children from creating their own fantasies." This is a typical bit of old-hat liberal corporation-hating Dr. Spockism of the sort that raised a generation of spoiled brats and ruined the Vietnam War for everyone. We conservatives say: it's time for grown-ups to put our foot down. We'll do the fantasizing around here.

PARDON MY OBSESSION, but the most heartwarming newspaper story I've read in months was in the December 14 *Wall Street Journal*. It reported that the mere possibility of tax reform has sent the tax shelter industry into a decline. The end of the year is tax shelter season, but Treasury Secretary Donald Regan spoiled Christmas for real estate syndicators and suchlike sharks by announcing his proposed revisions of the tax code on November 27. Regan's changes would take most of the fun and all of the profit out of investments for tax purposes that make no real economic sense. Without even being enacted, Regan's proposal is making the economy more efficient and adding to federal revenues. Don't let anybody tell you it's a bad idea.

THE NEWS gets more and more stylized. FIRM ALLEGEDLY CLAIMED TIES TO ADMINISTRATION, *The Washington Post* reported breathlessly on page one the other day. The reporter, my friend Howie Kurtz, had obtained a copy of a letter from an obscure Washington consulting firm to officials of an Indian reservation, bragging that the firm's connections with the Reagan Administration could help the Indians get government housing grants. A few days later, another story was buried on page ten of the *Post*: REPUBLICAN LOBBYISTS EXPANDING: ADVANTAGES SEEN AFTER LANDSLIDE, by Tom Edsall, reporting that all the big-time lobbying firms are snapping up Reagan officials and hoping for a banner year helping a variety of special interests to oppose the Administration's budget cuts and tax reform plan. The fact that Washington is drowning in influence-peddling barely makes the paper, but when some obscure idiot writes the obvious in a letter, it's front-page news.

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